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Palestinian Affairs

Territories Leaders Criticize Israeli Announcement

'Ashrawi: Israelis Buying Time

TA2711175991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Report by Moti Amir]

[Excerpt] Palestinian leaders in the territories this evening sharply criticized the Inner Cabinet decision, but only after closely studying the Israeli Government's official announcement presented to the media about an hour ago. Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman of the Palestinian delegation, who held a news conference in her Ramallah home, said that the Palestinians view the Inner Cabinet decision as an attempt to gain time in order to avoid dealing with the substance of the negotiations. She said that Israel, in opposition to the view of the sponsors, the United States and USSR, is trying to dictate terms that suit it while ignoring the fact that it is not the only partner to the negotiations. Several members of the delegation were present in Dr. 'Ashrawi's home, including Dr. Sari Nusaybah, Dr. Zakariya al-Agha of Gaza, and Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, who as usual stressed that the decision is obvious extortion by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and we will see how the Americans respond. [passage omitted]

'Urayqat: 'Slap in the Face' to Washington

JN2711174391 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Basim Abu-Sumayah dispatch from the occupied territories]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, expressed the belief that Israel's rejection of the date for resuming bilateral negotiations is a slap in the face to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

He added that this emphasizes anew that the Shamir government is seeking, in every step, to torpedo the peace process.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian negotiating team, announced that the Palestinians are going to Washington on 4 December to participate in the second round of the negotiations.

In a press statement she read to reporters this evening, she described the Israeli demand to delay the date of the negotiations as a muscle-flexing game with the United states, adding that this will lead to a confrontation between Washington and Tel Aviv.

She concluded by saying that Israel has tried in the past to impose its conditions on the Palestinians, and it is now trying to impose similar conditions on the two countries which are sponsoring the peace conference and, subsequently, on the entire world.

Israeli 'Lack of Seriousness' Seen

JN2811171691 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1604 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to the Palestinian president, has maintained that the Israeli Government's request to postpone bilateral negotiations from 3 [date as heard] to 9 December shows a lack of seriousness on the part of Israel, with regard to handling the issue of peace, as well as an attempt to evade substantive discussions along the lines of the bases contained in U.S. President George Bush's initiative.

At a news conference yesterday in Glasgow, Scotland, carried by TAP [Tunis Afrique Presse], Abu-Sharif added: Israel's attempt to have the date set by the U.S. Administration changed shows that it is trying to gain time and bring the negotiations closer to the time when the loan guarantees it requested from the United States will be discussed. He went on to say that the proposal of Washington as a venue for bilateral negotiations is acceptable, provided that the United States deals with all parties on an equal footing.

It is worth noting that Israel demanded yesterday that the date for bilateral negotiations be postponed until 9 December, contending that the date [set by the United States] is too early, and that it needs time to make good preparations for the negotiations.

Al-Husayni Departs for Consultations in Sweden

To Rally Support for Peace Talks

JN2711171791 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Brother Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Advisory Council for the Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, headed for Sweden yesterday. Reports cited informed Palestinian sources as saying that brother Faysal al-Husayni will hold talks with Swedish officials to rally support for the peace process and to prepare for the next phase of negotiations. The sources added that al-Husayni will ask Sweden to put pressure on the Zionist entity to make it respond to international legitimacy, implement UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and to halt settlement activity.

The sources did not rule out that brother al-Husayni might tour other Scandinavian states.

Returns, Comments on Coordination With Syria

TA2811182391 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Report by Udi Segal, correspondent in the territories]

[Excerpt] In the territories and East Jerusalem, preparations are being completed for the bilateral talks in

Washington. Faysal al-Husayni, the head of the overall Palestinian delegation, returned today from a series of meetings and discussions abroad. On his return from Amman, al-Husayni said that full coordination has been achieved between the Palestinians and the Syrians on how the bilateral talks with Israel will be conducted.

Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian negotiating team, left for Syria a few days ago. The advisory council to the Palestinian delegation today held a series of consultations in East Jerusalem. Al-Husayni is now at home and is about to hold a series of meetings into the night. Tomorrow, he and the other Palestinians will leave for Amman, from which they will go on to Washington. Al- Husayni said that they will arrive in Washington on 4 December and wait for the Israelis. [passage omitted]

News Conference on Decision To Stay Behind

TA2811191691 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni will not leave for Washington with the Palestinian delegation. Our correspondent in the territories Amir Hay reports that in a news conference at his home that ended a few minutes ago, al-Husayni said that at this stage of the process he must remain here to mediate among the warring Palestinian factions opposing the peace process.

Nevertheless, al-Husayni clarified this evening that he is still head of the advisory committee to the Palestinian delegation. It was also decided this evening to reduce the size of the advisory committee leaving for Washington from 14 members to six. Three officials will represent the territories—Hanan 'Ashrawi, Zahirah Kamal, and Dr. Sari Nusaybah—and three the Palestinian diaspora.

Delegation Makeup Discussed

TA2911075291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Report by territories correspondent Udi Segal]

[Text] These days, on the eve of the forthcoming practical stage of the bilateral talks, the Palestinians are concentrating on what should be done at home. The fact that Faysal al-Husayni is to remain in East Jerusalem indicates that despite everything, the Palestinian public is not ready for the peace process, and propaganda and preparatory work are still necessary.

The negotiating team remains unchanged: All 14 delegates will leave for Washington. The advisory council was reduced to six delegates, three of them from the territories: Hanan 'Ashrawi, Sari Nusaybah, and Zahirah Kamal. Faysal al-Husayni explains that the delegation is designed to be purposeful and efficient:

[Begin al-Husayni recording] We think that this time, a smaller number of people is preferable. We believe they will be required to do work of a more technical nature. Some people have legal training, such as Raja' Shihadah, and there are others whose training may not be as obvious as Shihadah's, but whom we know to possess the requisite understanding and ability. [end recording]

Al-Husayni, who has just returned from a tour abroad, said yesterday that there is full coordination between Syria and the Palestinians. Does this mean that the Palestinians have aligned themselves with the extreme Syrian position? Al-Husayni says it does not.

The Palestinians know that the preliminary Washington talks will address technical matters, such as place and time. It appears that on this issue, the Palestinians are not adamant. Faysal al-Husayni says that the venue of talks will be discussed in Washington.

[Begin al-Husayni recording] It depends on how things will develop. If we see that the other side is serious, that it really wants something to happen, anything can come to pass. [end recording]

The Palestinian delegation will wait for the Israelis on 4 December in Washington. In the meantime, there is a lot to be done in the territories in anticipation of the beginning of talks that will address the substance of the arrangements.

'Abd-al-Shafi on Meeting With Syrian Officials

JN2711173991 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian side to the joint delegation, has returned to Amman from Damascus.

During his visit, he met with ranking Syrian officials. Talks dealt with coordination on the next peace negotiations in Washington between Arab parties and Israel.

In an interview with our correspondent for political affairs, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi described his talks in Damascus as fruitful.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Dr. Haydar, I want to ask you about your talks in Damascus yesterday with Syrian officials.

['Abd-al-Shafi] My talks in Damascus focused on coordination between the Arab delegations—the joint Palestinian- Jordanian delegation, the Syrian delegation, and of course other delegations. Coordination has a special importance, and because Arab interests are integrated it is only natural to have a unified position which can be realized through coordination. I can say that my talks in Damascus have been good and our Syrian brothers are principled in their readiness for productive coordination.

[Reporter] Are there going to be any changes in the Palestinian delegation?

['Abd-al-Shafi] There will be no changes in the present stage, although from the principled point of view, change is possible if the need arises.

[Reporter] What about the U.S. reply concerning facilities the Palestinians have requested?

['Abd-al-Shafi] As for the U.S. reply, I have no direct connection with this issue. However, my information is that they have some objections to certain Palestinian personalities. In my assessment, this should not be an obstacle because there are Palestinians who can assume the required role and the Americans have no objection to them. [end recording]

Advisory Council Holds Meeting in East Jerusalem

TA2811113891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Report by Udi Segal, correspondent in the territories]

[Text] In the territories activities continue to prepare for the bilateral talks in Washington early next month. This morning, the members of the advisory council to the Palestinian delegation met in East Jerusalem for a series of consultations. Faysal al- Husayni, the head of the delegation, has not yet returned from his trip abroad and the advisory council is now waiting for answers from him on the upcoming moves. The advisory council will probably leave for Amman tomorrow where the members will meet with Jordanian colleagues prior to the Washington meeting. At the same time, the supreme committee of the political committees set up recently in the territories convened in Ramallah. The supreme committee has 17 members. It convened this morning to discuss a plan of action. The members apparently worked out a plan which includes peace demonstrations in the territories during the Palestinian delegation's presence in Washington. Among other things, we will again witness olive branch demonstrations and Palestinian meetings with Israeli peace activists.

Also in the territories, a block was hurled at an Israeli car this morning near the Ramallah military government building. The woman driving was slightly hurt when the windshield was smashed. The woman was given medical treatment on the spot and sent home.

'Abd-al-Shafi on Substance of Washington Talks

JN2811100191 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Nov 91 pp 28, 23

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the negotiating Palestinian delegation, has said he expects a change in the composition of the Palestinian delegation. He said that "the composition of the delegation to the second round of talks in Washington will be announced today when the entire delegation arrives in Amman from occupied Palestine via the King Husayn Bridge."

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, official spokesperson for the Palestinian delegation, is keeping in touch with the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem to follow up the issue of granting entry visas to the United States to a number of advisers to the delegation who are members of the PLO.

He added: The U.S. reply will arrive today, and it will be announced by Dr. 'Ashrawi, who is expected to arrive in Amman today with the Palestinian delegation from Jerusalem in occupied Palestine. In our reply to the invitation to attend the second round of talks in Washington, we listed the names of those advisers who are members of the PLO, as well as the names of the Palestinian authoritative institutions.

The head of the Palestinian negotiating team revealed that "the invitation to attend the second round of talks in Washington has stressed the need to move the venue from Washington to the Middle East shortly after the start of negotiations." Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi added: We reject this, and we cannot consider it because it has no basis.

The head of the Palestinian delegation rejected Israel's concept on autonomy, which it considers a "services issue" and added: We seek a transitional Palestinian government that transfers the sovereignty over Palestinian lands and waters from the hands of the Israeli military rule to the transitional Palestinian government.

He said: We will demand an immediate Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem. We will also demand international protection for our people by UN troops until the establishment of our independent Palestinian state, which seeks to achieve a confederation with Jordan.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi stressed that "the means and stages of the transitional phase will form the core of the second round of talks in Washington to transfer the power from the Israeli military rule to the Palestinian people."

He said: We will demand an immediate halt to all settlement activities, including the expansion of settlements, the building of roads, the confiscation of lands, and sealing off areas in our occupied territories.

He added: We will also demand the return of deportees, the release of detainees and prisoners, and the discussion of Jerusalem, the return of Palestinian refugees, and our people's self-determination, ending up with the establishment of our independent state. We have the right to do so because we have paved the way for it in Madrid.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi criticized the municipalities committees and the political committee that was set up recently in occupied Palestine, stressing that "these things are premature" and calling for "postponing such measures for some time until we know how the negotiations are proceeding." He added: The municipalities committees

are connected with autonomy, and we do not want Israel to take advantage of them to strengthen its position during the negotiations.

Concluding his statement to AL-RA'Y, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the internal situation inside occupied Palestine is cohesive, and added: There is a real direction to achieve just and lasting peace. This, however, does not mean that our people have abandoned their struggle and great intifadah.

Abu-Sharif—Withdrawal To Be Broached at Talks

PM2811102991 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Nov 91 p 4

[Rashid Khashanah report: "Abu-Sharif Says: Palestinian Delegation Requests Scheduling of Israeli Army's Withdrawal"]

[Text] Tunis—Bassam Abu-Sharif, an adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has emphasized that the second round of the bilateral negotiations, which will begin 4 December in Washington, "will be the first round to deal with the substance of a political settlement." In a statement to AL-HAYAH in Tunis yesterday he pointed out that the Palestinian delegation will raise "the need to schedule the Israeli forces' withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories and will propose that they be replaced by multinational forces or U.S.-Soviet forces."

He said: "This position has crystallized through coordination with Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. And there were no disagreements over any point during our talks with King Husayn. A very positive meeting was held with President Hafiz al-Asad and it was agreed to coordinate deeply over every step, whether at summit level or the level of the Arab delegations in Washington."

Abu-Sharif urged the U.S. Administration to provide the Palestinian delegation with facilities "similar to those to be provided to the other delegations." He said: "As the United States has proposed Washington as a venue for the negotiations, it is logical that it should deal with all the parties participating in the bilateral negotiations on equal footing." He emphasized that the PLO, "which supervised the course of affairs in Madrid, will continue to supervise Palestinian participation in the other phases of the peace conference." And he called on the U.S. Administration to enable "the group of advisers, whose presence in Washington is important so that they can be beside the Palestinian delegation, to go to the United States to advise and counsel the delegation."

He pointed out that the delegation that participated in the Madrid conference will not necessarily be the same one that takes part in the second round of the bilateral negotiations in Washington "because each round has its own subjects and each subject has a specific person allocated to it, and the struggle characteristic will not be the only characteristic required in the Palestinian delegation members."

Abu-Sharif expected the U.S. Administration to agree to "grant facilities to the Palestinian delegation and the PLO so as to guarantee good progress in the negotiations."

He pointed out that U.S.-Palestinian dialogue "will resume soon." It was suspended by Washington in May last year.

He called for "organizing as soon as possible a broad meeting with leaders of the U.S. Jewish community, which said yes to (President George) Bush's plan and did not accept (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq) Shamir's plan and which is heading toward clear and open support for the Palestinian people's national rights.

He cited 'Arafat's meeting with a U.S. Jewish delegation in Stockholm in 1988, "whose outcome was very positive." He said: "The time has come to hold another meeting between PLO leaders and U.S. Jewish community leaders. Palestinian leaders can be chosen from the various PLO institutions—the National Council, the Central Council, or the Executive Committee. This is in order to crystallize ideas about finding a comprehensive political solution in the Middle East and to draw up a joint working plan which we and they can cooperate in implementing and which aims to bolster Bush's plan and put pressure on the Shamir government to soften its position in the negotiations."

He described the resolutions of the recent Israeli Labor Party conference as "a turning point not only for the party, but for Israeli society as a whole." He sees a halt to the building of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as "the necessary prelude for the bilateral negotiations' success." He emphasized his confidence that the United States "is serious in its promises and inclination" to exert pressure on the Israeli Government. He ruled out moving the bilateral negotiations from Washington, "because the venue for the negotiations is discussed after each round, and Moscow might be proposed as a venue for the multilateral negotiations, while Washington remains as a venue for the bilateral negotiations."

Delegates Depart for Amman Consultations

TA2911083891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] The Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks has left for consultations in Amman. Our correspondent Moti Amir has learned that one of the delegates, Sami al-Kilani of the Yasir 'Abd- Rabbuh faction, did not leave with the group. Apparently, he disagreed with the composition of the delegation's administrative and advisory personnel.

A total of 30 Palestinian activists left for Amman today: the 12 delegates, the advisory council, and administration personnel. Our correspondent notes that the delegation was equipped with a detailed work paper containing demands to be presented to Israel with regard to the next stages of the political process. The Palestinians have

formulated stands regarding the interim period that are incompatible with the autonomy plan outlined in the Camp David accords.

Our correspondent adds that Faysal al-Husayni is not leaving for Washington for the time being. He is busy organizing support for the delegation in the territories. If substantive matters are broached in the talks, he will join his colleagues. In such an event, says our correspondent, teams of experts from the territories will also be dispatched.

'Abd-Rabbuh: Washington Favored as Permanent Venue

JN2911091291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
29 Nov 91 p 22

[By Fathi al-Barqawi from Tunis]

[Text] AL-RA'Y—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat is expected to visit Jordan within the next few days to meet with His Majesty King Husayn and senior Jordanian officials.

Prior to leaving Tunis for Amman yesterday afternoon as part of a Palestinian delegation that also includes PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab and Akram Haniyah, adviser to President 'Arafat for the occupied territory affairs, PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh made an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y. He said that the primary coordination steps between Jordan and the PLO with regard to the upcoming negotiations in Washington have been taken.

Commenting on the latest developments, especially Israel's attempts to obstruct the peace process, 'Abd-Rabbuh asserted that in the PLO's view, the U.S. capital should be a permanent venue for bilateral negotiations. He stressed that this venue cannot be changed without the approval of all the parties concerned, indicating that Israel has no right to unilaterally ask that the meeting be held in another capital.

The PLO Executive Committee member opined that the eagerness to maintain Washington as the venue of negotiations stems from the fact that the United States is responsible for the progress of the negotiating process. It is also the party which raises proposals about the agenda or the course of negotiations.

'Abd-Rabbuh indicated that Israel wants to immerse the negotiations in procedural matters and formalities in order to gain time and to eventually kill the peace process. He indicated that in every phase of negotiations, Israel has adhered to issues concerning the venue or other administrative issues.

The Palestinian official also commented on the agenda proposed by the U.S. Administration. He said that although the agenda includes some substantial issues, during the first session of talks on 4 December the Palestinian delegation will propose that first on the agenda be a complete halt to settlement activity under international supervision. This will ensure that other substantial issues concerning Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories and the transitional period can be discussed.

With regard to recent Israeli maneuvers, 'Abd-Rabbuh said that a continued firm stance by the cosponsors of the conference—the United States and the Soviet Union—will force the Yitzhaq Shamir government to change its stand during its expected meeting the day after tomorrow, Sunday, something which will significantly affect the subsequent course of negotiations. He explained that the balance of the negotiating process cannot be maintained if Israel continues its attempts to veto every issue, be it substantial or procedural.

Commenting on Arab coordination in this regard, the PLO Executive Committee member said that there is an Arab agreement and that all concerned Arab parties will participate in the 4 December meeting. He outlined the Palestinian view that the current available opportunity is appropriate for beginning discussions and coordination among these parties to adopt a unified stand on convening a preparatory meeting for multilateral sessions in Moscow before the end of next month.

He added that through contacts with Jordan, Egypt, Syria, the Arab Maghreb states, and Saudi Arabia, the PLO is seeking to hold a high-level meeting as soon as possible, as there is now an opportunity to achieve Arab concord and political agreement on the peace process.

'Abd-Rabbuh concluded his statement by responding to a question on whether the United States will grant entry visas to those parties it has not yet agreed to allow entry. 'Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh expressed the hope that a solution to this problem will be found before 4 December. He asked Washington to deal positively with this issue in the interest of the negotiating process.

Washington Talks 'Serious Test' of U.S. Neutrality

LD2811211891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1702 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Brothers, the convening of the upcoming bilateral talks in Washington at the beginning of next month constitutes a serious test for U.S. neutrality from the Palestinian viewpoint. So far Palestinians have demonstrated adequate flexibility regarding many procedural and fundamental issues concerning the progress of talks in the hope that the United States would change its stances, which are biased toward Israel, and that it would deal with it on an equal footing with all the other parties. So much so that it has become clear that among the aims of Palestinian policy in the management of the peace talks with Israel is to bring about a neutral U.S. stance, something that Israel fears and fights against. That is why the Palestinian response to the U.S. invitation to resume bilateral talks in Washington was candid; stressing its agreement in principle on the venue for holding the talks on the one hand, and reminding on the

other hand of the need for U.S. neutrality in order to ensure the success of the peace process. It is not right for the United States to host the talks and continue to treat the Palestinian delegation in accordance with an Israeli perception and impose conditions on it which are not imposed on the other parties. The talks must be held between equal parties which enjoy the same freedom and privileges in selecting advisers and supporting teams, requesting assistance, in travel, movement, and other things. Hence, the mere indication of the possibility of not granting entry visas to some members of the Palestinian political leadership abroad brings doubts to the credibility of U.S. neutrality, undermines the status of the Palestinian delegation, and encourages Israel to persist in its intransigence and imposition of further conditions. The Palestinian delegation is an indivisible unit and it must be dealt with on this basis. It is the delegation of the Palestinian people inside and outside. Consequently, it has the right, the same as all the other delegations, to select its negotiators, advisers, aids, and technical teams without prior conditions that would subjugate it to elements of political and geographical division. The U.S. statement, to the effect that U.S. laws might prevent members of the PLO from entering its territories, is no longer justifiable in light of the PLO's positive stances vis-a-vis the peace process and its concern for it to continue, despite the internal political difficulties it is facing, and in light of some positive changes embedded in the resolutions of the Labor Party, the second largest party in Israel, which left the door open for an Israeli dialogue with the PLO. This persistent hanging on to that statement means only one thing to Palestinians—namely the appeasement of Shamir's government and belittlement of the Palestinian stance that supports the peace efforts which are sponsored mainly by the United States.

'Abd-al-Shafi on Libya, PLO Representation

JN2811081991 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 28 Nov 91 p 5

[By Wafa' Mataliqah]

[Excerpt] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian side of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, has warned against the repercussions of the U.S. threats against Libya and said that any U.S. military action against Libya will adversely affect the peace process.

He expressed hope that the Americans will not resort to any military measures because this contradicts with the current world detente and the climate of the peace conference. He denounced and rejected any threats of military action against any free, independent, and sovereign country.

On the Palestinian delegation's recent visit to Moscow, Dr. 'Abd- al-Shafi told AKHBAR AL-USBU' that the talks with the Soviets were good. He stressed that the Soviets continue to support international legitimacy concerning the Palestine question.

There is hope that the Soviets will render the U.S. position more balanced in the peace conference, he said. Due to its difficult circumstances, the Soviet Union no longer has the weight it used to have; in other words, it is no longer a superpower, 'Abd-al-Shafi said.

On the acceptance of the Palestinians to participate in the second round of the peace talks in Washington, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the acceptance is initial.

He said the political leadership of the Palestinian delegation, the PLO, demanded facilities for the Palestinian delegation, like those given to the other Arab delegations. They include entry permission for all members of the delegation, whether negotiators or advisers.

Pointing to the flexible Palestinian position in Madrid, he expected the resumption of the PLO-U.S. dialogue. Although the Americans have not made any commitment in this regard, he said, the resumption of the dialogue, God willing, is on its way to realization.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said all members of the Palestinian delegation openly represent the PLO. Despite what has been said about the exclusion of the PLO from the negotiations, we say that we represent the PLO. The PLO is our political reference, and we worked within the resolutions of the Palestine National Council. If the PLO was bypassed in the conference, then this was in form, not in substance. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Stresses Need for Red Cross Representation

JN2811164891 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1604 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, affirmed during a meeting yesterday with a European troika delegation the need for the PLO to be represented at the international conference due to be held by Red Crescent and Red Cross societies in Budapest tomorrow, Friday.

The PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, said that the European troika delegation was made up of the EEC representative in Tunis, as well as the ambassadors of the Netherlands, Italy, and Portugal in the Tunisian capital.

Egypt

King Husayn To Visit Egypt in 'Next Two Days'

NC2711180491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1730 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Amman, 27 Nov (MENA)—Informed Jordanian sources today said that King Husayn of Jordan will visit Egypt during the next two days.

The sources added that the Jordanian king's talks with President Husni Mubarak during the visit will center on promoting Egyptian-Jordanian relations.

King Husayn's visit to Egypt is the first since the Gulf war.

Jordanian Official, Musa Comment on Ties, Peace

NC2711134291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1141 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Nov (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received 'Ali al-Suhaymat, Jordanian deputy prime minister and transport minister, at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis today. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, the Jordanian ambassador to Cairo, and the Egyptian ambassador to Amman also attended the meeting.

Following the meeting, al-Suhaymat said that was pleased to meet President Mubarak. He added that he conveyed to President Mubarak the regards of King Husayn as well as a message from the king concerning coordination between the two countries on common Arab issues. Al-Suhaymat described the meeting as good.

The Jordanian deputy prime minister expressed the hope that the meeting would be a prelude for resuming excellent ties and upgrading them further. Al-Suhaymat said that the views of both countries are identical and that relations are expected to undergo a quantum leap in the near future. Asked about the possibility of a meeting between President Mubarak and King Husayn in the near future, al-Suhaymat said this is for the president and king to decide.

Foreign Minister Musa commented on Egyptian-Jordanian relations by saying: Egyptian-Jordanian coordination is continuing and will continue in the framework of the peace issue. There is a general Arab commitment to coordination on that important issue and this will reflect on other aspects of relations. We welcome the visit of the Jordanian deputy minister and are glad to see him. This is a reassuring step on the path of high-level Arab coordination at this critical stage.

Minister Musa said that the Damascus Declaration countries will meet next April. Musa said that coordination is underway and working papers are being prepared. He added that there are plans for a meeting on the expert level and that coordination among Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] will begin following the GCC summit.

Minister Musa said security arrangements in the region is a long and complex issue that cannot be addressed quickly or treated lightly. This is a serious issue and there should be more consultations on it, he noted, adding: There have been changes in the Arab region and the world. There have also been changes in the concept of security and the form of threats, he continued, noting: This necessitates careful study. This does not mean that we need to waste years in examining the matter, but we have to proceed slowly on that matter to avoid declaratory remarks and one-upmanship, which Egypt wishes to avoid, Musa said.

Musa said that the Egyptian diplomacy will follow closely the second session of the bilateral peace negotiations, which will open in Washington on 4 December. Musa said three important steps have been taken so far:

First, the convocation of the peace conference with the participation of all sides, including the Palestinian delegation and the fact that all the participants listened to what the others had to say.

Second, the start of the bilateral talks.

Third, the general agreement by all Arab parties to pursue the peace process and attend the bilateral talks.

Musa noted that these three steps were positive, but added that we must be aware that the peace process is complicated and that progress will be slow. He said several problems exist but there is no crisis regarding the peace process.

Minister Musa expressed his hope that the pace of progress would be faster following the first phase of negotiations. He noted that there is no alternative to the peace process. The peace process must be allowed to succeed on the basis of exchanging land for peace, right for right, and security for security, he said.

Minister Musa elaborated on this by saying: The process should be balanced, not in the sense of searching for compromise solutions, but in the sense of finding solutions that are based on principles, true and just solutions without which nothing can be achieved.

Answering a question on whether Egyptian advisers could join the negotiating Palestinian team, Minister Musa said that the Palestinian delegation can seek the assistance of Egyptian advisers, adding that such a development would represent a private arrangement between the Palestinians and any experts who have experience with the peace negotiations, excluding Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials.

Visa-Free Entry for Jordanians Extended

NC2911111491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1002 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] Amman, 29 Nov (MENA)—Egyptian Ambassador to Jordan Muhab Muqbil stated that it has been decided to extend the period for the entry of Jordanians into Egypt without a visa until further notice.

In a statement to the MENA correspondent in Amman, the ambassador said that the Egyptian Government has told him that measures due to go into effect 30 November requiring Jordanians to obtain a visa have been postponed. He added that Jordanians can enter Egypt without getting a visa beforehand, as was the case for them in the past.

Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi on Threats Against Libya

JN2811173891 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has left Alexandria for his country following a three-hour session of talks with President Mubarak.

This afternoon, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak discussed with al-Qadhdhafi the U.S. and Western threats against Libya. Informed Egyptian sources said that during the talks, al-Qadhdhafi emphasized the need for a unified Arab stance against the United States and Western nations in the event of any military assault against Libyan territory. Al-Qadhdhafi pointed out that the campaign to which Libya is now being exposed is aimed at terminating the Libyan revolution and checking Libyan popular progress, asserting his country's innocence of the charges being brought against it. Al-Qadhdhafi said his country's rejection of the U.S.-British warning announced yesterday evening is in line with the Libyan position which rejects such accusations.

The leader of the Libyan revolution renewed emphasis on his proposal to conduct a neutral investigation under international supervision. He also urged President Mubarak to make efforts to form an international committee to study and implement this proposal.

Al-Qadhdhafi also asserted his country's rejection of terrorism, saying Libya had earlier announced its clear, unambiguous position toward terrorism. He said threats against his country represent manifest terrorism and that they are not based on any real evidence.

For his part, President Mubarak informed the Libyan president of the outcome of his trip to Italy and France. He also briefed him on his contacts with London and Washington. Mubarak stressed his country's position, which rejects military threats against Libya.

Finally, the two leaders discussed the possibility of holding an emergency Arab summit to be preceded by a meeting of Arab foreign ministers to discuss these developments.

Paper on U.S. Concern Over Egyptian-Libyan Ties

NC2811145591 Cairo MISR AL-FATAH in Arabic 25 Nov 91 pp. 1, 10

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Excerpt] The past few days have witnessed extremely serious developments in the U.S.-Western conspiracy being hatched against the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

In an unexpected development, the United States has officially asked Egypt to close its borders with Libya. Meanwhile, Washington has listed nine responsible Libyan figures, including Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the revolution, and Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jalloud, for arrest and trial on charges of being directly involved in what Washington calls the recent "terrorist operations."

Well-informed diplomatic sources have told MISR AL-FATAH that the U.S. President recently endorsed a U.S. military plan to blow up Libyan weapons' storehouses, the Libyan man-made river pipes, and Libyan airports and ports. Washington and Britain agreed in principle to begin preparing the possible implementation of this plan in the second half of December, barring major developments.

Late last week Washington was concerned about significant and recent developments in Egyptian-Libyan relations, particularly following President Mubarak's decision to open borders with Libya. The U.S. Administration claimed this will encourage "terrorist" activities in the region, and asked Egypt to swiftly reconsider and take bold measures that could see a return to the status quo. Washington demanded that the borders be closed swiftly; economic, scientific, and industrial cooperation programs and all other activities with Libya frozen, on the basis of what it described Egyptian policies' firm principles of not dealing with a "terrorist" country in or outside the region.

Deliberately trying to sabotage fraternal ties between Egypt and Libya, Washington claimed that Libya will take advantage of the open borders to export what it called "terrorism" to Egypt. Further, the open borders will give "terrorists" of all nationalities a suitable opportunity to carry out "hostile" acts against other countries' sovereignty and security. Washington added, noting that the United States fears Egyptian territories might be used as a staging ground for such acts. During its contacts with Egypt, Washington asked it to comply with any decision to impose international, political, and economic sanctions against Libya. Cairo rejected the U.S. requests, noting that its relations with Libya are not about borders only, but historic, Arab, and common ties. [passage omitted]

Columnist Warns Against Attacking Libya

NC2811104991 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 24 Nov 91 p 7

[Article by Ihsan Bakr, "Terrorism and International Responsibility"]

[Excerpts] The United States will make a big mistake for itself, its credibility, and the international community if it commits folly against the Libyan Jamahiriyah. It will make a bigger mistake for the entire Arab nation, Middle East peace, security, and stability if it takes military action against Libya.

Whatever the pretexts, reasons, and arguments given by the U.S. Administration and the British Government for blaming the Libyan regime for the crime of exploding the American airplane over Scotland in 1988, "terrorism" must not be countered by terrorism carried out by a superpower such as the United States, which has now assumed world leadership, raising human rights slogans, and applying international legitimacy, even though there is no conclusive evidence that Libya carried out the operation.

Perhaps no one in the East or West disagrees that past Libyan Jamahiriyah actions, on domestic or foreign policies, often exceeded the logical and rational which should characterize any state. No one knew what the "Great Jamahiriyah" was seeking by extending material and moral support to world extremist movements—Arab and non-Arab—from "Abu-Nidal", Carlos, and the Red Brigades to the Red Indians. This cannot be denied or argued, even by those close to the Tripoli regime.

But this—we must admit—was in the past. These chapters have folded and must end. What deserves to be recognized and encouraged are basic changes in Libyan policy and attitude, at least in the past two years. These changes brought Libya closer to entering the international community, which adheres to laws and abides by international conventions and norms. [passage omitted]

The Arab public in particular was greatly surprised when the United States and Britain initiated crisis with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime, blaming the Jamahiriyah for the American aircraft explosion over Scotland in 1988 in which 270 innocent people perished.

Many questions are being asked: Why is this issue being activated now, and what unequivocal evidence is there to incriminate the Libyan regime? When the incident took place about three years ago, the finger was first pointed at Syria, then Iran and Libya. But now U.S. President George Bush says that Syria was unjustly accused. Iran was also exonerated. Immediately there were comments that Damascus and Tehran were exonerated because the United States needs them for the Middle East peace process, and that Libya is the region's weaker link. [passage omitted]

Whatever the crisis' final chapter, all signs indicate that Washington and London want to make Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi another Saddam Husayn, who must be isolated, combated, and liquidated. This is very serious and unacceptable interference in an independent Arab state's internal affairs. The Libyan people alone are entitled to punish the colonel or consolidate his position as the people's leader. [passage omitted]

Paper on 'Strange' Accusations Against Libya

NC2911091491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0735 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Nov (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR calls for calm self-restraint and efforts to tackle civilly and unemotionally the problem between the United States, Britain, France, and Libya concerning the American airliner that exploded in 1988.

In its editorial, the paper says today that the various statements issued by the United States, Britain, and France holding Libya responsible for the tragedy and leveling serious accusations against Libya make the three countries "adversary, judge, and executioner" all at once.

It describes this stand as a "strange" one coming from countries that are proud of their democratic systems, widespread freedoms, and excellent judiciary systems. It adds that there are several international organizations that can take part in studying all aspects of the issue and holding the necessary investigations, using all means to come up with the full truth; only then can the countries that have suffered demand that the culprits be punished and this should be done under the auspices of the United Nations and the Security Council, which were primarily established for tackling such crises. It stresses that this is the only way that can satisfy world public opinion on this issue.

Israeli Attempts To 'Derail' Talks Denounced

NC2811090991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0606 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 28 Nov (MENA)—The newspapers AL-AHRAM and AL-AKHBAR today denounce Israel's attempts to derail the bilateral talks set to begin in Washington on 4 December.

AL-AHRAM says that Israel has begun to feel that it is being forcibly led to the bilateral talks after Washington chose the 4 December date. It also feels that Washington intentionally announced this hours before U.S. President George Bush was due to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

In an editorial under the headline "Tug of War," AL-AHRAM notes that Israel never wanted the talks to take the course they have taken. The paper adds that Israel at first succeeded in turning the idea of an international conference into bilateral talks. Then it broadened its hopes to isolating and meeting each of the other parties

separately to make the greatest possible gains and operate from its position of strength as the party controlling the land.

The paper continues: The Madrid conference, which Israel reluctantly accepted, was not only "suspiciously international," something Israel always objected to, but also saw stances strongly opposed to Israel. Even the United States, "its supporter and protector," appeared to be somewhat neutral.

AL-AHRAM says that this situation was burdensome to Israel and appeared to it a bit like pressure exerted by a country that was visibly the overseer of the talks.

It adds that the coolness that met Shamir in Washington—when he participated in setting the date and venue of the bilateral negotiations and that made him interrupt his visit and return to Israel in protest—might strengthen the trend opposing negotiations in Israel and Shamir himself might intentionally blow life into it to wage a strong campaign against the Bush administration.

In conclusion, the paper says that Israel and the United States are expected to engage in a power conflict in which each will try to prove its ability "to impose its wisdom," not merely on the other party but on its election scene as well. It notes that the elections in Israel will coincide with the U.S. presidential election late next year.

Under the title "The Israeli Veto Is a Useless Weapon," AL-AKHBAR asks if it is enough for Shamir to say no to halt the peace talks that began in Madrid and to dissipate the hopes the world community has set on this historical opportunity. It says: Does Shamir have the veto power to ruin months of efforts to prepare for the Madrid conference and surmount the obstacles he himself laid in its way?

The paper notes that the U.S. State Department denied Shamir's claim that he was not consulted in the choice of Washington as a venue for the renewed talks and reports the U.S. State Department's announcement that Baker discussed this issue with Shamir. In this way, Shamir has revealed the intentions that he thinks are hidden but in fact are very clear to world public opinion.

The paper adds: Even if Shamir's claims are true, this is not sufficient reason for him to profess anger at the U.S. stance and threaten to boycott the meetings.

It describes Shamir's attempt to impose arbitrary conditions such as limiting the coming meetings to discuss procedural matters as an attempt to gain as much time as possible before discussing the details of the basic issues, the handling of which will determine whether the negotiations fail or succeed.

The paper asserts that Shamir's stance and the methods he uses to get out of the predicament to which he believes Washington and Moscow have lured him come as no surprise and have been expected of him ever since he reluctantly agreed to go to Madrid.

Ambassadors To Act as Palestinian Advisers

NC2711195891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1602 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Nov (MENA)—Ambassadors 'Izzat 'Abd-al-Latif and Tahir Shash will leave for Washington on Monday to work as advisers to the Palestinian delegation, at the delegation's request, during the bilateral negotiations scheduled for 4 December.

The two ambassadors participated in autonomy negotiations in Camp David in 1978 and have experience in this area.

The two ambassadors ended their diplomatic careers at the Foreign Ministry when they reached retirement age. Ambassador 'Abd-al-Latif's last Foreign Ministry post was director of the Palestine Department, while Ambassador Shash was director of the ministry's Legal Department.

Musa Issues Palestinian Solidarity Day Message

NC2811194391 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Egypt believes a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue is the only way to achieve the kind of peace that will bring the region's peoples stability, which in turn will enable them to devote their potential to development. He said peace will benefit all parties. This came in a message Musa addressed to a ceremony held this evening to mark the International Day for Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The message was read by Assistant Foreign Minister Fawzi al-Ibrashi.

Musa said that the convening of the peace conference in Madrid at the end of October is considered a historic turning point in regional history. He said this is a first step toward establishing relations of understanding and neighborliness among the region's peoples to achieve a permanent and just peace based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and on their true substance, which provides for returning the occupied Arab territories to their rightful owners in return for peace, security, and stability for all countries and peoples in the region.

Musa stressed that Jerusalem has its own special status, which must be subject to negotiations through agreement within the framework of the international legitimacy—a framework formulated by resolutions on which the international community has concurred. He pointed out that Egypt is looking forward to when a future concept prevails in the region, a concept that will serve the region's peoples and lead, through the international community's support and participation, to a permanent and just settlement based on respecting the principles of international law and the UN Charter, and recognition of the Palestinian people's political and legitimate rights.

People's Assembly Expels Three Members

NC2911063791 Cairo Egyptian Space Channel in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Excerpt] A joint committee from the General Committee and the Legislative and Constitutional Committee of the People's Assembly today decided to abrogate the membership of assembly members 'Ayid Sulayman, Muhammad Mubarak Mansur, and 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Jawad for lack of confidence and credibility.

Deputy Kamal Khalid objected in writing to the decision, while Deputy Fikri al-Jazzar expressed reservations on the decision. Deputy Diya'-al-Din Dawud rejected the decision to abrogate the membership of 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Jawad.

In a four-hour meeting, the joint committee members listenend to the pleas of Deputies Muhammad Mubarak and 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al- Jawad, while Deputy 'Ayid Sulayman failed to show up for the meeting. [passage omitted]

Military Talks With Saudi Arabia Conclude

NC2711214991 Cairo Egyptian Space Channel in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Excerpt] Defense Minister General Husayn Tantawi has emphasized that the close Egyptian-Saudi ties, the foundation of which was laid by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and President Husni Mubarak, are strong and solid. Gen. Tantawi made this statement during a meeting he held today with Staff General Muhammad Bin-Salih al-Hammad, chief of staff of the Saudi Armed Forces, at the conclusion of his four-day visit to Egypt.

The defense minister added: We are working together successfully on the exchange of experts for training purposes as well as the exchange of delegations on military issues.

The Egyptian-Saudi military talks concluded today. The Egyptian side was led by Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Salah Halabi, while the Saudi delegation was headed by Staff Gen. al-Hammad. [passage omitted]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Rejects U.S., UK Lockerbie Charges

Urges Hague Court Inquest

AU2811170091 Paris AFP in English 1617 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Excerpts] Rome, Nov 28 (AFP) - Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi refused on Thursday [28 November] to turn over two Libyans accused of blowing up a Pan American World Airways jet over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Speaking in a television interview here, Colonel al-Qadhdhafi dismissed U.S. and British evidence against the pair and said the International Court of Justice should decide if Libya "had something to do with the attack". [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi repeated that Amin Khalifa Fjima, one of the two suspects, had nothing to do with the bombing, having "left his job in Malta with the Libyan airline three months before the attack".

He said "the other man, Abdel Basset Ali, has not been identified in Libya, where many people have the same name".

"We challenge the experts to present their proof before a neutral party," he went on, adding "the proof which the Americans say they have against Libya is laughable."

Al-Qadhdhafi said "the investigation is being pursued in Libya" and "those who want to join in the research can do so".

In an interview published in the Spanish newspaper EL PAIS, al-Qadhdhafi also dismissed U.S. and British evidence against the Libyans but added that if "everybody shows that Libya is implicated in this incident, then Libya will assume its responsibility and, if it is an individual action, then this person will assume his responsibility".

The United States and Britain have issued warrants for the arrest of the two Libyan officials, said to be involved in intelligence work. [passage omitted]

In London, the British Foreign Office said: "The proper outcome of the investigation into Lockerbie is a trial where the crime took place."

Britain said it expected Libya to comply "promptly and in full" with a British and U.S. demand Wednesday for Libya to hand over the two Libyans for trial.

"We are continuing to consider what further steps might be needed" and "consulting with close partners," the Foreign Office added.

In Paris, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said France would break off "diplomatic relations" with Libya and impose "sanctions as a result" if it were proved Libya was responsible for blowing up a DC-10 belonging to the UTA airline in 1989.

That attack killed all 171 people aboard.

A French judge has issued international arrest warrants against four alleged Libyan intelligence agents—including a brother-in-law of al-Qadhdhafi—in connection with the mid-air explosion.

Dumas made his comments in a meeting with Francoise Rudetzki, who heads an association for victims and survivors of criminal attacks, Rudetzki disclosed.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard confirmed that if Libyan culpability was established, the government would draw the necessary conclusions, including a break in diplomatic links.

'Humanitarian Indemnity' May Be Paid

AU2911101491 Rome ANSA in English 0855 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Excerpts] (ANSA) Rome, November 28—Libyan leader Mu'ammar al- Qadhdhafi today urged hearings before the International Court of Justice in The Hague to settle Anglo-American charges of Libyan involvement in the Lockerbie air disaster in a TV interview on the air in Italy this evening.

Interviewed by the Italian-language TV station Telemontecarlo, he also said Libya would be prepared to pay a "humanitarian" indemnity to the relations of the victims provided this was not construed as "an admission of guilt".

The U.S. and Britain on Wednesday set conditions they said Libya must meet to avoid reprisals for alleged Libyan involvement in the bombing of Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, on December 21, 1989. All the 270 passengers and crew on board were killed.

Britain and the U.S. have said Libya must hand over the two Libyans they have fingered as responsible for the disaster and pay compensation, as well as making all the information it has acquired available to external investigators.

In his interview, Al-Qadhdhafi pointed out that like "any other country," Libyan law does not permit simply handing over suspects to another nation. At the same time, he noted, Libya has no extradition agreement with Britain or the U.S. [passage omitted]

In levelling the charges against Libya over Lockerbie, Britain and the U.S. were joined by France claiming that the same hit team downed a French DC-10 with 17 on board in the Sahara Desert in September, 1989.

In an immediate reaction to Al-Qadhdhafi's proposal for the charges to be heard before the international court, Perez de Cuellar said that if the Libyan authorities want to bring the case up, the court, a UN body, will "certainly be ready to contribute to the search for a solution to the problem."

During the day, al-Qadhdhafi, whose interview with Telemontecarlo was matched by one with the leading Spanish daily EL PAIS, flew to Egypt for a three-hour meeting with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. Radio Cairo said the charges against Libya were the main topic.

Although condemning terrorism, Egypt has voiced criticism of U.S. threats to attack Libya if the two alleged bombers are not handed over. In this, Al-Qadhdhafi has sought and found Arab support, obtaining the Arab League's backing.

France has said that if Libya fails to cooperate, diplomatic relations may be broken off. Libya, the U.S. and Britain have already snapped their diplomatic ties reciprocally.

The demands issuing from London, Washington and Paris have also received backing from Spain, whose relations with the Arab world are traditionally intense, and Bulgaria, under its previous regime charged with training Libyan terrorists.

The European Community foreign ministers are expected to take a stand in the next few days.

Foreign Liaison Bureau on U.S.-UK-French Charges

LD2911084491 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 21 Nov 91

[Text] Tripoli, 29 Nov (JANA)—The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has issued a statement, the text of which follows:

The People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation perused the statements issued by the United States, the United Kingdom, and also France. After completing its study of these statements, the Committee emphasizes the following:

1. Libya has publicly emphasized, and is reiterating before international public opinion, that its policy is against all forms of terrorism and all terrorist operations aimed against the innocent civilians. It stresses that it has not been and will not be connected to any group, whatever its nomenclature might be, that carries out any such inhumane action because Libya itself was the victim of terrorism. The world definitely will be convinced of this policy, and in a clear and specific practical way. The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah reaffirms that it will not allow the use of its territories or citizens in terrorist operations.

2. In spite of the fact that some statements included unfriendly language, but because of its conviction that justice in the world is indivisible, Libya would like to recall that the concerned Libyan authorities have received the text of the accusations addressed to two Libyan citizens by the chairman of the Grand Jury of the District of Columbia of the United States, the attorney general of the United Kingdom, and also the French statement concerning the French DC-10 airplane. Libya will deal with these documents in a constructive, positive spirit.

3. In this regard, Libya addressed the aforementioned, which made the allegations, through an official letter issued by the investigating magistrate assigned by the competent authorities, in which he asked to see the investigation files relating to the regrettable incident of Pan Am flight No. 103 which crashed over Lockerbie, or

to fix a date for meeting those who made the allegations so as to proceed with the necessary investigation to arrive at the facts.

4. All the requests made by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of France will receive every attention, as the competent Libyan authorities will examine these requests and deal with them seriously in a manner compatible with the principles of international legitimacy, including the rights of sovereignty and the importance of ensuring justice for the accused and victims. Libya welcomes the possible arrival of a committee of Arab and international jurists to follow up the proceedings of the investigation.

5. Libya views positively the international relaxation and the climate the latter has spread, which has consolidated world peace and international security; leads to the emergence of a new international order in which all states are equal, in which the principles of peoples' freedom and choices are respected, and in which the principles of human rights, the legitimacy of the United Nations, and the principles of international law are reaffirmed.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Receives Libyan Official 25 Nov

EA2711202091 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1030 GMT 26 Nov 91

[Text] Khartoum, 26 Nov (SUNA)—Yesterday evening Lieutenant General Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Council of Ministers, received Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunus, member of the historic leadership of the 1 September Revolution. The meeting was attended by Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the RCC and of the Council of Ministers.

After the meeting, Col. Yunus said that his visit was an extension of the visits between the two countries' leaders in confirmation of the special relations between the fraternal countries. It also came within the framework of cooperation, integration, and unity between the two countries. He further clarified that visits between Sudan and Libya would continue until the integration process was achieved.

As for an Arab stand towards the imperialist attacks on the Jamahiriyah, Col. Yunus emphasized that the crystallization of the Arab stand was subject to the United States and its allies escalating the situation. He pointed out that the Arab peoples would have to fully carry out their responsibilities if no solution could be found to the current crisis.

Iraqi Minister Delivers Message to al-Bashir

JN2711201191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1918 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Khartoum, 27 Nov (INA)—Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council, received here today 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hashimi, visiting Iraqi minister of higher education and scientific research.

In a statement to an INA correspondent following the meeting, al-Hashimi said that he delivered a message from President Saddam Husayn to his brother Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir dealing with fraternal bilateral relations and the current Arab situation. He also conveyed greetings and appreciation from the Iraqi leadership and people to the Sudanese Government and people for their honorable stand toward Iraq during this critical phase.

On another level, the minister met in Khartoum with the management of the African University and discussed means of strengthening relations between Iraqi universities and the African University.

*Sudanese Journalist Denied Entry Into Egypt

92P40067C Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH in Arabic 31 Oct 91 p 1

[Text] The day before yesterday, well-known journalist Professor Musa Ya'qub headed for Cairo on one of his customary visits to Egypt. However, he was confronted unexpectedly by a decision by Egyptian judicial authorities to deny him entry into Egypt. He was placed in detention room No 1039 at Cairo International Airport until he was returned to Khartoum 12 hours later. This was the first incident of this kind.

Professor Musa Ya'qub is known for his writings, his concerns, and his private communications in the interest of developing relations between the two countries, a fact that makes this incident all the more astonishing to people in journalistic and political circles in the two countries.

A spokesperson for the Union of Sudanese Journalists has condemned this discourteous act to which Professor Musa Ya'qub was subjected at Cairo airport and described the measure as an action without justification.

*Central Bank Governor Previews New Law

92P40067B Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH in Arabic 3 Nov 91 p 1

[Text] Mr. al-Shaykh Sayyid Ahmad al-Shaykh, governor of the Central Bank of Sudan, announced that the new law on regulating banking operations in the country would be issued in the next few days. He declared that the law is meant to strengthen the role of the Central Bank in regulating the aims of the new credit policy that was recently promulgated.

In a news conference yesterday, the bank governor said that professionals, small-scale producers, and those with limited income would be the beneficiaries of the new credit policy, because it would create productive outlets for their expertise and capabilities in their vocational fields. The bank governor reviewed the new credit policy in detail, saying that it was formulated in consultation with entrepreneurs and a large number of economists in the country. He added it was based on certain goals which serve and support the three-year program and the state's political program. Mr. al-Shaykh enumerated the new activities with which the new policy is concerned, for example:

- low- and middle-income housing for individuals and for groups
- lifting the restriction on financing for 24 essential commodities
- permission for financing the purchase of commercial investment items from suppliers
- limiting the ceiling on financing for southern states within the ceiling imposed upon each bank for nonpriority sectors
- opening the possibility for banks to obtain financing from the Central Bank above the established ceiling as a way of averting some of the negative effects of the falling credit ceilings
- putting together some financing [packages] with the goal of financing through the Bank of Sudan.

*Insurance Companies Must Close Foreign Accounts

92P40067A Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH in Arabic 2 Nov 91 p 1

[Text] The Central Bank of Sudan issued a decree yesterday to all insurance and reinsurance companies imposing upon them a requirement to close their foreign bank accounts and to apply to the bank for permission to open foreign currency accounts inside the country. The decree indicated that the request to convert to the foreign [currency account] must be accompanied by a good will certificate from a national reinsurance company containing assurances that the petitioning company can pay its obligations to the national insurance company, along with a statement of its indemnification status, a declaration of the amount requested for conversion, fixed conversion dates, and the duration of installment options, in addition to the recommendation of the insurance inspector.

Tunisia

Foreign Minister, Iraqi Counterpart Discuss Ties

JN2811090791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0745 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Tunis, 28 Nov (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn met here last night with Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya.

They discussed ways to bolster bilateral relations to serve the interests of the two fraternal countries. They also reviewed Arab and international developments.

Mr. Ahmad Husayn reviewed the ramifications of the unjust economic blockade imposed against the Iraqi people by the United States under the pretext of international legitimacy. He called on Arab brothers to take a serious pan-Arab position to lift the blockade, which has resulted in the death of thousands of children, women, and elderly persons, contrary to all international conventions and norms.

Mr. Husayn arrived here yesterday on an official visit of several days to Tunisia.

Sudan Said Sponsoring 'Fundamentalist Terrorism'

JN2711170891 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] The Tunisian Government newspaper LE PRESSE has accused Sudanese authorities of transforming Sudan into a veritable base for fundamentalist terrorism, affirming that there now exist more than 30 terrorist training camps.

Citing informed sources, which it did not name, the paper said that international terrorist training camps exist in Khartoum and its suburbs, and that similar camps have been established in Cyprus and in Peshawar, Pakistan.

The Tunisian paper noted that the aim of Hasan al-Turabi, head of the Sudanese Islamic Front, is to extend active assistance to the various fundamentalist movements that seek to assume power in Arab and Islamic countries.

Guard Attempts To Assassinate Defense Minister

NC2811152291 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1420 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] In the past few days one of the guards of the Iraqi defense minister, the criminal 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, tried to assassinate him. 'Ammar Latif Ziyad, 29, from Tikrit, has been working as a private guard for the criminal 'Ali Hasan al-Majid for three years.

The criminal 'Ali Hasan al-Majid was furious about unrest in the brutal Tikriti family [of Saddam] and arrested anyone he thought might have been involved in this daring attempt. Shame on the rascal 'Aflaqite scoundrels. Retribution's just hands will reach all criminals and murderers in our country and in our Islamic nation sooner or later.

Two of Saddam's Private Guards Executed

NC2711162991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Dictator Saddam Husayn executed two of his private guards, 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Juburi and Sabah 'Abdallah Khalaf al-Juburi, on 24 October as part of the dictator's liquidation campaign among the ranks of the Army, Republican Guard, and private guards.

Iraqi opposition sources said the two were executed 24 hours after being arrested for allegedly stealing Saddam's personal belongings. Sources emphasized that the two guards, who belong to the al-Jubur tribe, were brutally tortured. Signs of torture were visible on their bodies, which were seen by their families before they were buried. The same sources pointed out that the real reason for the executions was that the dictator suspected the two were connected to the group of Captain Sattam al-Juburi, who was executed on 17 July of last year along with Republican Guard officers from the al-Jubur tribe. The dictator's authorities accused Captain al-Juburi of planning to assassinate the dictator Saddam Husayn during a military parade scheduled for January of last year but which was canceled by the authorities.

Kurdish Leader Barzani Departs for Baghdad Talks

JN2811143791 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1414 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Dear listeners: With the aim of discussing the current situation in Kurdistan; out of concern for finding appropriate solutions to the existing problems; in order to push things in the right direction to serve the course of understanding, dialogue, and the option of peace in resolving the Kurdish issue; and in order to reinforce Arab-Kurdish fraternity and the Iraqis' national unity and future, brother struggler Mas'ud Barzani left for Baghdad this morning, Thursday, 28 November 1991, on a visit of several days.

Meets With 'Izzat Ibrahim

JN2911113591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1126 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Nov (INA)—'Izzat Ibrahim, Revolution Command Council vice chairman, today received Mas'ud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Parties Front and leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

The meeting was attended by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister, and Staff Lieutenant General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, defense minister.

Kurds Report Turkish Attack on Zakho Area

JN2811162491 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Zakho—Our correspondent in the militant first branch of our party has said that at 1000 and 1100 on 27 November 1991, helicopters of the Turkish regime attacked [names of villages indistinct] in the Zakho area. We have not yet received information on the losses as a result of this act of aggression.

Radio Denies Turkish Report on Irbil Attack

JN2811161391 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] A few days ago the Turkish news agency ANATOLIA transmitted a news report which it attributed to our radio station—the Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan—and which was broadcast by several world radio stations, that an Iraqi Army (?unit) had attacked the peshmergas in the Irbil area.

We deny what ANATOLIA attributed to our station. No such report was (?broadcast). This news report has been intentionally attributed to the Voice of Kurdistan to create confusion and to cloud people's vision.

Iranian Delegation Discusses Refugees in Iraq

JN2811173091 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 27 Nov 91 p 1

[Report by Lahib 'Abd-al-Khaliq from Baghdad]

[Text] Farhad Shihabi, head of an Iranian delegation currently visiting Iraq, has emphasized that his talks with the Iraqi Government concerning Iranian refugees in Iraq are proceeding positively.

In a statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH, he said that 10,000 Iranian refugees have expressed a desire to return to Iran and that Iraq has offered facilities toward that end.

Today, Wednesday, the Iranian delegation will visit al-Ramadi to acquaint itself with the conditions of some of the Iranian refugees. They will return in the evening and are scheduled to resume talks in Baghdad the day after tomorrow.

He concluded by saying: The Iraqi side has thus far shown itself to be positive and understanding.

Iran Urged To Improve Relations With Baghdad

NC2611162991 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio in Persian 0650 GMT 26 Nov 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] People of Iran, neighboring and coreligionist brothers and sisters: Each day that passes proves our forecasts. We have repeated that world arrogance's thirst and bloodlust knows no limits, that it seeks a new victim each time, and that its victims are the oppressed and combatant people.

We believe that world arrogance will continue its quest for victims with the utmost savagery. Daily it seeks new victims and, as we have repeated, Iran will not be exempt from arrogance's plans. The day will come when this rabid and bloodthirsty savage will attack you, just as it has its other victims, because combatant and Muslim Iraq's resistance has deepened the wounds, making it more mad and more bloodthirsty.

Alert people of Iran: We are living in a trying era, and if the oppressed, especially the combatant and Muslim people, do not realize arrogance's threat, the faith's front will disintegrate. Do not be fooled by the sweet words of hirelings or arrogance's minions and their organizations, namely the United Nations, one of the U.S. Administration's tools. Do not be fooled by Perez de Cuellar's assertions that the United Nations intends implementing Resolution 598. This and further steps depend on the will of Iraq and Iran, and Iranian leaders having the courage to destroy and remove the walls built between Iraq and Iran by past groundless fears. Then Iraq and Iran will not need this resolution. They can try mutually to solve problems between them. If Iranian leaders realize their responsibility to the region's people, especially Iranians, then the region can be safeguarded from the rabid world arrogance and its thirst for blood. When arrogance sees that the regional peoples are distanced from each other by differences and disputes, its thirst for blood and savagery increases.

So, we hope that Iranian leaders will realize this dangerous reality's dimensions and ask themselves what they should do. The answer is clear at this difficult juncture, when the region's people are moving toward freedom and independence: It is necessary to seek unity among these people and refrain from discord and dispute. The distance between them should be decreased and a basis for common understanding created. This can be accomplished only through Iranian leaders' courageous step of removing the walls of groundless fear which world arrogance is trying to maintain to keep the distance between the two neighboring and Muslim countries.

This is what should be done as savage world arrogance seeks new victims among combatant people and threatens one country, namely Libya, with destruction and aggression. The big question facing Iranian leaders is: What should be done under such sensitive conditions?

Opposition Figures To Hold Talks in U.S.

NC2711170691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Gulf war, the Iraqi independent grouping will hold an international conference of Iraqi opposition groups on 16 January in the United States. A number of U.S. officials, particularly U.S. congressmen, as well as international political figures, will attend the conference. A great number of Iraqi opposition leaders, thinkers, and politicians also will be invited to the conference.

Dr. 'Abbas Mahdi [not further identified] has told our radio station that the U.S. Government has expressed full readiness to facilitate the entry of the conference guests and to provide the necessary facilities to make this international conference successful. The conference, which will be the first of its kind, will examine the political future of the new Iraq following the collapse of the defeated tyrant's regime. The conference also will discuss the best and most practical ways of freeing the Iraqi people from the rule of the dictator Saddam Husayn.

Israel Conditionally Accepts Washington Talks

Official Announcement

TA2711161791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1528 GMT 27 Nov 91

["Official announcement" by Ehud Gol, the prime minister's media adviser, on the government's decision on the peace talks in Washington; 27 November—recorded]

[Text] Israel is interested in continuing the peace process as soon as possible through direct negotiations between the sides. It should be pointed out that we view Washington as a hospitable city and as the capital of a friendly country. We have, however, explained repeatedly and at all levels, that for the negotiations to be effective they must be held in the region, for a number of reasons. We have reason to believe that the Arabs are not interested in talking to us or conducting direct negotiations with us, but in talking to the United States and trying to use it to apply pressure.

The Arabs aspire to a framework that would be a continuation of the Madrid conference; that is, to be as close as possible to an international conference, or as far as possible from the framework of direct negotiations, free of involvement by other elements. The proposal to hold the three meetings simultaneously in Washington will gather all the Arab delegations in one place. Experience has shown that in such a situation the lowest common denominator decreases, extremism takes over, and the chances for real negotiations become minimal. We are talking about negotiations conducted simultaneously with three Arab parties and a negotiating framework of supreme importance, which relates to the security and future of the State of Israel. It is, therefore, vital that the negotiations be conducted close to the decision-making political echelon in Israel, to permit close supervision, frequent consultations, and ongoing guidance to the negotiators.

In view of the above, and taking into account the U.S. invitation, and out of respect for it, Israel is prepared to hold one or two meetings in Washington so that afterward the negotiations will be conducted in the region and close to it. Israel also suggests holding the meetings in stages with periods of four to five days between one set of negotiations and the next, with the first group meeting on 9 December 1991. Israel hopes that the negotiations will be resumed at the earliest possible time and that the Arab side will conduct direct negotiations with us as agreed upon. That is the surest way to make progress and reach the sought after peace.

Netanyahu Views Decision

TA2711172491 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Studio interview with Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Rafi Reshef on the " 'Erev Hadash" program—live]

[Text] [Reshef] Good evening, Deputy Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Reshef] Have we made it categorically clear that we will not show up in Washington on 4 December under any condition?

[Netanyahu] We have suggested holding one or two meetings in Washington on 9 December. The reason for this was quite simple, by the way. This is not a show of muscle. I am not against flexing muscles when necessary, but this is simply a logistical problem. We need to organize ourselves. We were given short notice to prepare for the negotiations, which are very important and maybe even crucial. Our proposal is to start there—or if you prefer to continue there—and rapidly move the negotiations to our region because this is the suitable and appropriate place to continue the talks with the Arab countries.

[Reshef] Yes, but before that I wanted to get something clear. So we are saying no to 4 December. What do we do if the United States requests, orders, or demands—whatever you like—that we come anyway?

[Netanyahu] Look, I certainly hope that there are no ultimatums here, either from them or from us. We are trying to further the process in a practical manner. Another few days of preparation time will make a big difference for us and help us get ready. This should not deter anyone. As for the Arabs, if they are prepared to arrive on 4 December, then they can just as easily come on 9 December. As far as Israel is concerned, this will make things easier for us. I do not think that these five days are the main issue, despite the media's desire to blow the issue out of proportion. The main thing is our desire to bring about direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states here in the region.

[Reshef] Forgive me for interrupting you at this point. So, what you are actually saying is this is merely a technical matter, and—forgive the expression—not an attempt to prove that Israel is nobody's fool and cannot be pushed around?

[Netanyahu] Rafi, I want you to know something. We have 43 years of experience in trying to reach peace with the Arab countries. We even succeeded in making peace, or at least partial agreements, with Egypt and with some other Arab parties. These agreements proved two things: First, the more we divide the package and conduct bilateral negotiations with an Arab party or country apart from other Arab countries, the greater the chances of success. Second, the most important way to progress is to lift the barriers of illegitimacy that the Arabs have placed before us. That is what began to happen in Madrid....

[Reshef, interrupting] Yes, but the fact is that....

[Netanyahu, interrupting] Let me finish because it is important to understand the logic here. Everyone is

attacking the point without perhaps understanding the logic behind the government's decision and its policy. We want to bring the Arabs to bilateral talks, while they want to make the talks multilateral—an international conference that does not end the de-legitimization of Israel. We want to bring them to the region because by the very fact of bringing them here....

[Reshef, interrupting] Okay, okay. Forgive me for interrupting you, but you more than anyone else know just how often you have already explained this point in numerous forums. I am trying to ask you what we have gained? We insisted on not going to Washington, and now we find ourselves on our way to Washington, if not on 4 December then on 9 December. What did Israel gain by its insistence?

[Netanyahu] The important thing is that we want to bring them here. We might have to go through Washington, but how long will we be there? In other words, the important thing for us is to hold these negotiations in the region, because we want the Arab nations to become accustomed to the idea of peace talks. Peace talks are, of course, held as close as possible to those countries that do not enjoy a state of peace.

I would like to add something. We should not get all excited over the fact that certain disagreements exist. So there are disagreements. This is a complicated and complex process. However, how can you say that you will not insist on anything? That you will say yes to everything because one cannot say no or cannot have both positive and negative views on different issues? That one must agree to everything? This government says yes when it has to give a positive response and occasionally says no when it sees fit. The truth of the matter is that this process will only move forward as a process of bilateral negotiations with the Arab states and without any preconditions, because we were insistent when we had to be.

[Reshef] I am nevertheless bothered, Mr. Netanyahu, by one thing. It is no secret that the Americans—even during Yitzhaq Shamir's visit—behaved in an unprecedented manner. You keep on talking about the media, its interpretation of events, a show of muscle. Why not flex some muscles? Is this not the natural thing to do at this stage, even if we accept your interpretations and explanations that this was merely a technical matter, that we needed time to organize ourselves?

[Netanyahu] I told you that I have nothing against what you call a show of muscle, but this is not the time.

[Reshef] Why?

[Netanyahu] Because we are really trying to promote a process. Believe me, had Israel really wanted to sabotage the process—as some people are saying—it could have taken other steps. What we are trying to do is to start negotiations that can achieve real results and practical agreements. Right now, the Arabs are doing their best to distance the process from the kind of peace we want, both in the geographical sense and in the way the negotiations are held. That is what Israel is struggling about.

[Reshef] You are a public relations expert and even now that is your official job. How will it sit with the U.S. public that all the parties have said yes and Israel is the only country to raise obstacles again—even if we are justified in doing so?

[Netanyahu] We are not raising obstacles. We want the negotiations to be held in the best way possible. The question I will put to you and later to the American public—and I am going to hold several interviews with the U.S. media—is quite simple: Why are the Arabs insisting on not holding the talks in the region? Al-Sadat did not insist on this. Anyone who really wants peace and a lifting of all the barriers will certainly not oppose a warming of relations and will not oppose bringing the talks to the region. I hope that eventually, after the current struggle or tension is over, we will hold the talks in the region and reach peace.

[Reshef] Yes, soon we will get some details on this matter from HA'ARETZ correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar, but from what he told me earlier, Yitzhaq Shamir arrived at today's Inner Cabinet session with far tougher and more determined positions, but several ministers somehow managed to soften him up a bit.

[Netanyahu, after a moment of silence] Is that question addressed to me? I thought you were asking 'Aqiva Eldar.

[Reshef] No, no. But perhaps your silence has already provided the answer?

[Netanyahu] No, I merely thought the question was addressed to someone else. The answer to your question of course, Rafi, is that we do not discuss the Inner Cabinet sessions, even on 'Erev Hadash. The Inner Cabinet will publish its official decision, and I suggest that you wait 30 minutes and hear the official communique.

[Reshef] Thank you, Deputy Minister Netanyahu.

Inner Cabinet Discussions

TA2711160791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Excerpts] Officials in Jerusalem have said that Israel's positive response to the United States would not include conditions for the continuation of the political negotiations.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan has learned that at the beginning of this morning's Inner Cabinet session, the prime minister suggested that Israel set as a condition that the United States guarantee that the peace talks would not continue in Washington but would be moved to another location, for example Lausanne, Switzerland. Several ministers, however, opposed that condition, and

according to the formula that was eventually accepted Israel will be ready to attend the talks in Washington, to hold one or two meetings with the Arab delegations there, and to continue the negotiations later in the region or nearby. [passage omitted]

Our correspondent also learned that during today's Inner Cabinet session there was a bitter confrontation between Defense Minister Arens and Foreign Minister Levi. Arens proposed that the Inner Cabinet not decide on its response to the United States today and put off the decision until the cabinet's weekly session on Sunday. Minister Arens said: We are a sovereign government that follows its own agenda. Foreign Minister Levi became furious and said to Arens: Outside you pretend to support the peace process while here in the room you make proposals designed to torpedo the political process. Arens reacted by saying that Israel must act wisely.

After the Inner Cabinet session, Defense Minister Arens said the decision to request a deferral was not a show of muscle, because the peace process was too important for power plays. The Israeli Government's sole intention was to find a date for the continuation of the talks that would be convenient for all the parties. Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchtfeld reports that Arens, who was touring Qarney Shomron, said that Israel was going to participate in the Washington negotiations without posing any conditions. Arens did not rule out the possibility that the talks would also deal with substantive issues and not simply procedural matters. Israel would be willing to discuss issues of substance, he said. The defense minister expressed the hope that the United States had no intention of insulting either Israel or Prime Minister Shamir. He added that Israel would not bow to U.S. dictates.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 27 November adds: "The defense minister estimated that the initial meetings would deal with procedural issues in order to arrange the venue for the negotiations and their date. Arens stressed that Israel had no intention of evading discussions on substantive issues pertaining to the peace arrangements. This, after all, was the very reason Israel agreed to begin negotiations in the first place, the defense minister said."]

Will Attend 4 Dec 'If No Alternative'

TA2811052691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Excerpt] There is some confusion about the Israeli position regarding the bilateral talks in Washington. Qol Yisra'el's diplomatic correspondent says that Israeli sources here would prefer 9 December as the date for the bilateral talks, but if there is no alternative, Israel would attend the talks on 4 December.

However, a senior Israeli source in Washington told Qol Yisra'el's correspondent in the U.S. capital that the Israeli delegation will show up for talks on 9 December. This, despite the fact that Syria and the Palestinians announced last night they would be arriving in Washington for talks on 4 December, the date announced by the United States.

The Israeli source also said that Israel is standing firm in its demand that only two meetings be held in Washington before transferring to the Middle East or a nearby location. Israel's Ambassador to Washington Zalman Shoval told Qol Yisra'el's correspondent that Israel is demanding that the U.S. Administration see to it that the Arabs negotiate directly with Israel. [passage omitted]

Ben-Aharon on Proposed Date

TA2811060591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister Office, by Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good morning, Mr. Ben-Aharon.

[Ben-Aharon] Good morning.

[Qital] What date do you envisage: 4 or 9 December?

[Ben-Aharon] 9 December. This is the cabinet resolution, to which we will adhere.

[Qital] How do you interpret the reaction of the United States which, on the one hand, has welcomed the positive response to the invitation, and on the other, has announced that its installations will be available as of 4 December?

[Ben-Aharon] Since they have set the date and invited the parties for 4 December, they do not wish to buckle. Yet, there is no problem of prestige on our part here, and we are not trying to convey the message that we would like to force our stand on others. The cabinet position derives from a combination of factors, which are as follow: We want genuine direct negotiations; we want them to be held in this region; and we want the negotiations to be held with each partner separately: With the Jordanian-Palestinians, the Lebanese, and the Syrians.

[Qital] How does the date relate to this?

[Ben-Aharon] It certainly relates. We wanted to avoid a repetition of what happened in Madrid. We do not want any forum resembling an international conference, or an event at which all the Arabs would sit together opposite us, even if the sessions are held in separate halls, because if that happened, the lowest common denominator would prevail. For that reason, we proposed that negotiations be held with several days' intervals between talks with each and every delegation. For the same reason, we added the extra five days—to enable us to get ready and to give the United States time to make preparations in accordance with our proposal. We hope things will indeed happen this way.

[Qital] I would like to understand: Will the talks be launched on 9 December with each party alternately, rather than simultaneously with all the parties?

[Ben-Aharon] True, this is what we have proposed. We do not mind with which delegation we start the negotiations; this point can be arranged either directly or through the United States. However, we would not like to conduct simultaneous negotiations with all the delegations.

[Qital] I will ask again: Why can we not follow the American plan, launching alternate talks on 4 December?

[Ben-Aharon] Because we also need time to make preparations. This whole thing came as something of a surprise to us. The prime minister was in Washington, trying to convince the Americans that it was preferable for all the negotiations to be held in the region, in order to show the nations in this region that a new leaf was being turned over in relations between countries, that the Syrians are meeting directly with us.

By the way, to this very day the Syrian people do not know that direct negotiations have been held because the Syrian Government has withheld the picture of the Israeli and Syrian delegations' meeting from them. In the Arab countries, the event is still being presented as a full-fledged international conference, with the United States leading and possibly forcing its views on the sides. For that reason, we have to do all we can to guarantee truly direct negotiations, and we intend to insist on just that. Otherwise, the process either will soon reach a standstill or will blow up in our faces. Therefore, we have allowed five more days to give time for preparations, both to ourselves and to the United States, which has to set things ready in accordance with our request to hold negotiations with one delegation at a time, with intervals between the delegations.

[Qital] Mr. Ben-Aharon, experience shows that such talks have a public relations facet. Do you not fear that Israel's image will suffer when everybody—even the Syrians and the Palestinians—show up on 4 December at the installations put at their disposal by James Baker and George Bush, with Israel being the only absent party?

[Ben-Aharon] I am not certain that our image will suffer because any sensible person will realize that we want genuinely direct negotiations. Even President Bush repeatedly stated in Madrid that a solution can be attained only through a direct dialogue between the sides. A direct dialogue should be held here in the region, and yet we have said that we are ready to hold a meeting or two in Washington. However, we do not have to travel to a far-away capital to hold negotiations that aim to solve a crisis between two neighbors living right here, in the Middle East. This is what we intend to explain to the American people. In our opinion, this is more important than what the Arab delegations' appearance before us will do to our public relations.

[Qital] Do you believe the Unites States will at some stage coerce negotiations in the region, as demanded by Israel, on the Arabs?

[Ben-Aharon] Anyone who wants negotiations must understand that the negotiating parties need to compromise with and understand each other. We must make our Arab partners forget the idea that the U.S. Government has joined their side and is about to conduct negotiations, which are a cover for U.S. pressure on Israel designed to make it buckle and do what the Arabs want. Therefore, we have to insist on our position. We will insist on holding the negotiations in the region, on their being direct, and on preventing outside—namely U.S.—intervention in the content of negotiations. This is another important issue. Perhaps at some future date we will require American suggestions, but it is inconceivable for us to accept U.S. proposals and ideas pertaining to the content of negotiations even before negotiations are launched. This is another message we conveyed to the U.S. Government through our ambassador in Washington.

[Qital] Thank you, Mr. Ben-Aharon.

[Ben-Aharon] And thank you.

Hopes for 'Compromise' With U.S.

TA2811090691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, by Yaron Wilensky and Gilat Levi—live]

[Excerpts] [Wilensky] Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, is our guest this morning. Good morning, sir.

[Ben-Aharon] Good morning.

[Wilensky] Is there talk of a compromise?

[Ben-Aharon] I hope we will attain some sort of compromise. It should be remembered that the issues at stake are vital to our security and our future. We constitute 50 percent of the conflict, and we are not talking about mere procedural or technical matters. [passage omitted]

[Wilensky] The question is whether compromise means a date somewhere between 4 and 9 December.

[Ben-Aharon] I do not know. The Israeli Government last night decided on and conveyed its stand to the U.S. Government. We have fully explained our stand, with which, by the way, the secretary of state has been long familiar. We want direct negotiations conducted in a quiet location as far as possible from media limelights and close to our region, to enable Israeli decisionmakers to be in direct and personal touch with our negotiators. Do not forget that for the first time, Israel is conducting simultaneous negotiations with all its neighbors except Egypt.

[Levi] The question is what Israel proposes to do in the five days between 4 and 9 December that it cannot do by 4 December.

[Ben-Aharon] It will be making preparations and conducting negotiations with the United States to ensure that the terms we have presented for the launching of negotiations are acceptable to the United States. We deplored the fact that the United States presented us with an accomplished fact last Friday, when it sent us a message stating that the negotiations would begin on 4 December and that all our partners have been invited. [passage omitted]

Ne'eman on U.S. 'Coercion'

TA2811071791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Yuval Ne'eman, minister of energy and infrastructure, science and technology, by Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good morning, Minister Ne'eman.

[Ne'eman] Good morning.

[Qital] Yesterday you objected even to the latest cabinet resolution, which the left wing has also sharply denounced.

[Ne'eman] True. We are a group of four ministers, who perceive the matter of negotiations in the same way it is perceived by a majority in the cabinet: not as direct negotiations, but as an instance of U.S. coercion and as an international conference to which Mr. Shamir and others had once objected so vehemently. What aggravates me right now is not the decision made by a majority, but rather a report I have just heard on the radio according to which some senior source said that if the Americans insist on 4 December, we will come on 4 December. Yesterday, the media made an attempt to assert that the whole issue revolves around the date, which made a farce of the decision of a majority.

I was glad to learn that a majority in both the cabinet and the Inner Cabinet realized that Israel has not attained the direct negotiations it has coveted for so long. What we have in fact is an American dictate, against which the majority has rebelled. One can doubt to what extent and how long this stand will resist pressures, but I am confident that yesterday's resolution, which was endorsed by a majority, clearly reflected a decision to put the negotiations back on a track in which the majority believes, namely, direct negotiations with the Arabs.

[Qital] This brings me back to my first question: You did not vote against what the media has done to the resolution. You voted against the cabinet resolution, and yet now you seem to be welcoming it. Why then did you vote against it?

[Ne'eman] What I said was that I am glad that yesterday, the ministers rebelled, that they insisted on their principles. Also, I think that progress has been made in that there was no argument yesterday about the fact that the Americans are trying to use coercion. The Americans are going to continue trying to impose their views, and therefore, our joining the negotiations is a mistake. I hope the majority will wake up even further to understand that this is not the right path. For that reason, the four of us voted against the process.

[Qital] Thank you very much, Minister Ne'eman.

Netanyahu—No Plans To Come 4 Dec

TA2811124091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has pointed out that at this point, the Israeli delegation does not intend to arrive in Washington on 4 December. In an interview with Qol Yisra'el, Netanyahu stressed that although Israel wants to attend the talks, it wants its three teams to come prepared. He noted that the date is not a matter of principle; rather, it is a practical matter involving a need to organize administrative and technical aspects of talks.

Deputy Minister Netanyahu added that we are in the midst of talks with the Americans, and he does not know what their final stand on the issue will be.

'Understanding' on Date Sought

TA2811084691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Excerpt] Israel's announcement that it will not come to Washington before 9 December did not ruffle the U.S. State Department, which replied at once: The doors will open on 4 December.

Despite everything, political sources in Jerusalem have expressed the opinion that the process will not be aborted over the question of date. The same sources found it difficult to believe that after so many procedural matters, including the question of venue, have been resolved, agreement will not be achieved on a matter of four days.

Israel believes that it will be possible to achieve some sort of understanding with the Americans on the date, but it stresses: The 9 December date is merely an Israeli suggestion, just as 4 December was a U.S. suggestion. They stress that these were proposals, not conditions. In other words, the matter can be pursued further.

Political sources said last night that in the coming days, Israel will seek contact with the United States in a bid to finalize the date issue in a way that will satisfy all the sides. [passage omitted]

Cabinet May Reconvene

TA2811093391 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 28 Nov 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev and the Washington correspondent]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The cabinet will meet again to deliberate Israel's position concerning the bilateral negotiations in Washington if the administration refuses to discuss the "proposals" adopted by the Inner Cabinet yesterday.

Senior sources in Jerusalem last night asserted that Israel was deliberately keeping vague its position of whether the "proposals" are conditions or not. The sources noted that Israel expected the administration to make contacts—even discreetly—with it to discuss the contents of the cabinet decision which was drafted by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and relayed last night by Ambassador Zalman Shoval.

The Inner Cabinet made three requests to the U.S. Administration: that the talks should be postponed from 4 to 9 December, that at the end of two meetings in Washington the negotiations should move "to the region or nearby," and that instead of concurrent talks with each of the Arab delegations the talks should be held "in stages" with intervals of four or five days between each set of talks.

The sources said that of the three conditions, the question of the date is the less critical. They added that a U.S. refusal to discuss these matters with Israel would be interpreted by Jerusalem as yet further evidence that the administration intends to "dictate" the procedures and content of the negotiations.

Last night some Inner Cabinet ministers seemed uncertain as to whether the cabinet would be summoned for another meeting if the administration rejects the Israeli proposals, with some thinking that it would and some that it would not. Shamir's associates noted that this question was deliberately "left in the air." As said, a decision to this effect will be made by the prime minister based on the administration's reaction. [passage omitted]

[A report by Washington correspondent 'Oded Shorer and Avino'am Bar-Yosef on pages A1 and A2 of Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 28 November adds: "In a letter to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says the Arab countries should not be allowed to avoid direct negotiations with Israel because this is the only way to end the conflict in the Middle East. The letter, relayed to Washington by Ambassador Zalman Shoval, includes the cabinet decision calling for postponement of the bilateral talks for five days.

["Shamir's letter is a few pages long. In it, the prime minister explains at length the reasons behind the cabinet decision and calls for increased coordination and cooperation between Israel and the United States."]

Objection to Date May Be Reviewed

NC2811111791 Paris AFP in English 1050 GMT 28 Nov 91

Jerusalem, Nov 28 (AFP)—Israel may reconsider its objection to attending bilateral Middle East talks in Washington on December 4 if the United States insists on the original date, a senior official told AFP Thursday.

The official, who declined to be identified, said Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's inner cabinet which met Wednesday to discuss the issue had decided secretly that it would reconsider its position on postponement of the talks for five days if Washington rejected the proposal.

Cabinet spokesman Ehud Gol said meanwhile that Israel had "not yet received the official American response to our proposal" to postpone the negotiations until December 9.

"So, at this stage, there won't be Israeli representatives in Washington on December 4, but until then everything is possible," he added.

Earlier, a senior Israeli official reaffirmed his country was prepared to attend the next round of Middle East peace talks in Washington, but not until December 9.

"We'll be in Washington the 9th, although the United States set December 4 as the starting date," Yossi Ben Aharon, the Israeli cabinet director, said in a radio interview, adding that Israel needed the additional five days "to prepare the talks."

The Middle East peace conference, which began with a plenary session in Madrid October 30, also includes delegations from Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian grouping.

Israel originally insisted that the next round of bilateral negotiations alternate between Israel and the various Arab capitals, but the Arab parties refused and the United States finally invited all sides to Washington.

Wednesday the Israeli Government agreed in principle to a Washington venue but only on December 9.

The U.S. State Department responded that it could not unilaterally change the date, but would accept the Israeli proposal if the Arab parties would also agree.

Syria, the Palestinians, Jordan and Lebanon have agreed to attend the Washington negotiations on December 4.

Dissatisfaction With Tutwiler Statement

TA2811190391 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Excerpts] Israel is not satisfied with the statement by the State Department's spokesperson and expects to receive an official U.S. reaction to the inner cabinet's decision to renew the talks on 9 December. The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem is waiting for the U.S. response to Israel's demands that the talks be held separately with each Arab country and that the talks continue in our region. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports:

Officials at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem really wanted to signal the Americans that Israel has reached the end of its patience. They wanted to indicate that the U.S. is not behaving like a honest broker and that already at the beginning of the peace process Washington's dictates repeatedly favor the Arab side. Israel believes that the Arab side is exploiting the U.S. mediation to exert pressure and avoid sincere, direct negotiations. The Israeli Government's announcement yesterday has created a very difficult public relations situation, and the reactions of the international community over the past 24 hours have not been very favorable to Israel. [passage omitted]

Therefore, Israel is waiting for an official U.S. declaration, which may not accept all of Israel's demands but will at least proffer some kind of compromise to prevent a crisis, thus permitting the peace process to continue, which, after all, is Israel's dream.

Levi on Leading Delegation

TA2811205091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi this evening said that he would not hesitate to head the Israeli delegation to Washington. I feel that there is a need to go there to resolve certain issues, he added. Levi, however, stressed that in the meantime he had no intention of heading the delegation.

As for the crisis in relations between Israel and the United States over the date of the bilateral talks, the foreign minister said that the friendship and ties between the two countries are strong enough and should be highlighted to point the political process in the right direction.

Levi—'No Intention' To Go To Washington

TA2811211591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has said that there was no doubt of Israel's desire to pursue the peace process. He therefore hopes that discussions with the U.S. Administration will resolve the problem over the date of the bilateral talks. Levi also expressed the hope that a situation will not come to pass in which the Arabs arrive in Washington and the Israeli delegation does not.

Our correspondent Sheli Yehimovitch reports that David Levi was speaking in Herzliyya before his supporters.

Levi asserted that he has no intention of going to Washington because the delegations were scheduled to be made up of ministry officials and experts; however, if his presence were required to resolve specific issues, he would not hesitate to go.

Shamir: Delegation To Be 'Active'

TA2811204291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that Israel will be active in Washington. Replying to our correspondent Gil Litman's question on whether Israel will make any gestures, Shamir said that he could not say now what the Israeli delegation will do in Washington but that we will definitely be active.

Asked how Israel's public relations machine will deal with the picture of a conference room devoid of any Israeli delegation on 4 December, Mr. Shamir replied that we will handle the matter as we have coped with other matters in the past. Answering another question, the prime minister expressed the hope that the problem of the special allocation funds will be resolved shortly.

Shamir was speaking at a conference of the Friends of the Israeli War on Drugs Authority.

U.S. Said Splitting Jordanian, Palestinian Teams

TA2811095391 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 28 Nov 91 p 2

[Report by Alex Fishman]

[Excerpt] From the technical arrangements made by the Americans for the bilateral talks in Washington it turns out that the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will split into two separate delegations. Information reaching the Foreign Ministry this week shows that the Americans intend to prepare two separate rooms: one for the talks between Israel and Jordan, and one for the talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

Hence, through technical arrangements, the Americans will be able to dictate matters of substance. Israeli officials believe that the administration plans to create a fait accompli, whereby the talks will be held between Israel and two delegations rather than with a joint delegation. The procedural excuse for this move will be the presence of an observer from the Jordanian delegation in the room where the Palestinians will be holding the talks with Israel and a Palestinian observer who will be in the Jordanian-Israeli room.

The negotiations are scheduled to be held in a few rooms in a government building in Washington. This technical arrangement will create the feeling that this is an ongoing

joint [as published] conference rather than separate bilateral talks between Israel and the other parties.

Nor do the Americans intend to assign separate rooms to the delegations to hold their internal deliberations. Each of the delegations will use its embassy in Washington for their consultations. This constraint might make the process cumbersome on the one hand, but it will prevent dramatic flare-ups on the other. It is not clear which embassy will be used by the Palestinian delegation. [passage omitted]

U.S. Warned on Sale of PRC Reactor to Syria

TA2911060591 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 29 Nov 91 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev and On Levi]

[Text] Yesterday Israel conveyed to the United States a severe warning regarding Syria's intention to procure a nuclear reactor from China and said that such a deal constitutes a serious danger to regional stability. Israel is demanding that the United States act quickly to cancel the deal.

Last night, security and political sources in Israel expressed their deep concern over what is seen here as a Syrian effort to enter the nuclear era. The warning, conveyed by the defense establishment to the U.S. Administration, says that the addition of a nuclear element to Syria's aggressive tendencies is very worrisome to Israel and might lead to a deterioration in the situation in the Middle East.

There is displeasure in the defense establishment with the PRC's intention to sell a nuclear reactor to Syria. An official announcement by the Chinese Atomic Energy Agency published yesterday said that the PRC intends to sell Syria a small nuclear reactor for research purposes. It was also reported that the sale of the reactor was made through the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Last night, senior sources in the defense establishment refused to comment officially on the reports about the Chinese intention to sell the reactor. They said that although what is involved is a small nuclear reactor which does not constitute any military danger, the main threat lies in the fact that China will train Syrian scientists to operate it.

The sources also said that "it is very regrettable to see that the world has still not learned the extent of the danger inherent in the transfer of a nuclear reactor and know-how to countries run by totalitarian rulers. Not long ago, we witnessed what such rulers are capable of when they achieve nonconventional capabilities. This is a negative trend, and it is very important that it end so that the peace process can be continued."

Arens—Settlement-Building To Continue 'Quietly'

TA2811094191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Report by territories correspondent Udi Segal]

[Text] The message conveyed by the defense minister to the Jewish settlers in the territories is that the settlement drive in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip will continue; there is nothing to fear at present. Yesterday the defense minister toured Nabulus and Qarney Shomron. In recent weeks, with the launching of the peace process, settlers have been hearing terms such as autonomy, the return of territories, and the evacuation of settlements. Defense Minister Moshe Arens arrived on a visit designed possibly to allay their fears.

[Begin Arens recording] Whenever I visit a location in Judaea and Samaria, I ask: How many residents live here? I was told today that there are 4,500 here, but in a year, their number will be probably three times higher; it will be definitely more than twice the size. This is an important enterprise, which strengthens our roots in our land and whose manifestations will be evident in every battle that still lies ahead of us. [end recording]

We asked the defense minister what he could promise the Samaria residents:

[Begin Arens recording] I can promise them one thing only—and it is not insignificant: This government will safeguard the vital interests of the State of Israel and of all the citizens of the State of Israel. [end recording]

Moreover, the defense minister proposes ways to continue building settlements. His advice to those engaged in settlement activities in the territories is: Continue building, but do so quietly.

Asked whether a settlement by the name of Rehelim will be set up on the site of the [28 October] terrorist attack at Tapuah junction, the defense minister replied:

[Begin Arens recording] I have often said that in my opinion, the Judaea and Samaria settlement enterprise should not be developed as protest, but rather as a practical activity where less should be said and more done. [end recording]

Arens did not say whether the settlement would be established, but he stated: I hope that those who have to understand my remarks, do understand.

While Arens had stated that the Inner Cabinet resolution was not a show of muscle, his visit in Samaria can be interpreted as a signal to the Americans.

Arens Recommends Settling 2 West Bank Outposts

TA2911094791 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 29 Nov 91 p 1

[Report by Alex Fishman and Shlomo Dror]

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens has instructed the defense establishment to complete preparations for the civilianization of two military outposts: Rehelim, near Shilo, and Yad Ya'ir, near Dolev. The decision followed Shamir's return from the United States. The Defense Ministry's recommendation will be presented to the cabinet for approval.

The military outpost near Dolev was established about a year ago after a local resident, Ya'ir Mendelson, was shot dead in an ambush. The Rehelim outpost was set up after the murder of Rahel Druck and Yitzhaq Rofe about a month ago. On the night of the attack, Arens arrived at the spot and promised the settlers to set up a civilian settlement on the site.

Settlement leader Beni Katzover said yesterday: "If a Jewish settlement were set up at the site of every attack, it would deter terrorists."

Guard Unit To Be Posted in Ari'el, Qarney Shomron

TA2811054591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens says that a civil guard will soon be set up in Ari'el in Samaria, and that soon after a similar unit will be established in Qarney Shomron. Arens told representatives of settlers in Qarney Shomron the establishment of civil guards would take place following the appropriate legal procedures. He also told the settlers that extremist elements were trying to undermine the peace process, and that had precipitated a recent rise in attacks. The defense minister promised that security would be tighter than usual.

Sharon Proposes Approving Illegal Housing Contracts

TA2911094391 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 29 Nov 91 p 23

[Report by Shlomo Dror]

[Text] Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon yesterday presented the government with a proposal to approve retroactively all the contracts the ministry signed illegally with builders in 1990 and 1991. It also suggests including parts of Judaea and Samaria in the definition of the country's Central District. The Construction and Housing Ministry has still not made the proposal, which was submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, public.

The proposal includes several clauses. The first clause suggests that the Treasury sign all the building contracts undertaken illegally during 1990-1991. One of the clauses recommends adding settlements situated beyond the Green Line—such as Ari'el, Bet Arye, Ma'ale Adumim, Betar, and others—to what is defined as the Central District, which runs from Ashdod to the Haifa suburbs. The significance of the proposal is that the Construction and Housing Ministry will be able to claim that massive building is under way in the Central District (but really in Judaea and Samaria), countering the Treasury's claim that building is being concentrated in the periphery, contrary to government decisions. It also means legitimizing ongoing massive construction in Judaea and Samaria under the definition: "Building in the Central District."

Another clause proposes that 25 percent of the construction be carried out in the center of the country.

The proposal also includes a clause suggesting that 5 million shekels be approved for the purchase of houses from Jerusalem contractors, another 4 million shekels for reconstruction of housing in Jerusalem, and an additional 4 million shekels for security purposes, probably for guarding the Muslim Quarter, Silwan, and other areas in East Jerusalem.

Sharon Advocates Annexing Settlement Areas

TA2811074391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Report by Shmu'el Tal on remarks of Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon in a "Likud forum in Herzliyya" on 28 November—recorded]

[Text] [Tal] Minister Ari'el Sharon says that the U.S. Administration automatically endorses almost all the Arab stands. The Americans are not interested in our cause, says Sharon, and we will have to withstand pressures.

[Sharon] What matters to the present U.S. Administration is the ability to force Israel to sign a treaty with the Palestinians by November, the date of elections in the United States. As far as can be seen today, this treaty contradicts Israel's vital interests.

[Tal] According to Sharon, Israel has never insisted on a condition out of concern for mere procedural matters, as the Arabs know very well.

[Sharon] Some people view the recent cabinet resolution as an act of heroism, of audacity, of national courage. I gave my colleagues this advice: Do not pose these conditions, because you will be unable to insist on them. You will not insist on them, and then there will be more shame, more humiliation.

[Tal] Sharon warns against the possibility of an eventual decision to implement autonomy, which has not been discussed by the cabinet. The decision will mean the establishment of a Palestinian state, he says, and we must take steps to offset the damage.

[Sharon] In case weakness causes the cabinet to adhere to the autonomy plan, God forbid, we have to take steps to reduce the dangers of autonomy. The step to be taken in parallel with autonomy is the annexation to Israel of areas settled by Jews.

[Tal] What are we taking to the United States?

[Sharon] I do not know. In my opinion, such decisive moves, on which our existence depends, demand preparations, a series of debates. Yet no such thing has happened so far. Therefore, my answer is that I do not know.

Moda'i Demands Inquiry on Sharon Budget Deviations

TA2811194191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] The dispute between the Construction and Housing Ministry and the Finance Ministry is heating up. According to Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i, the Construction and Housing Ministry went over its budget by 4.5 billion shekels. The finance minister called for the appointment of a state commission of inquiry to investigate the affair.

Our correspondent Shlomi Eldar reports that Moda'i added that contractors who signed agreements with the Construction and Housing Ministry that had not been endorsed by the Finance Ministry were gambling on their money.

In response, the Construction and Housing Ministry declared that Yitzhaq Moda'i's totally unfounded attacks were merely a continuation of attempts by Treasury officials to undermine the building projects now being carried out throughout the country. Moda'i's attack, according to the Construction and Housing Ministry's spokesman, was an attempt to obfuscate sloppy mistakes by Treasury officials in budgeting the Construction and Housing Ministry's activities.

Following Moda'i's statements, Knesset Members Gad Ya'aqobi, Yosi Sarid, and Hayim Oron submitted urgent proposals to the Knesset's agenda. They demanded that an commission of inquiry be established to investigate the budget deviations and the violation of the Budget Law by the construction and housing minister and his subordinates.

King Sends Letter to Egyptian President

Letter Conveyed by Transport Minister

JN2711122691 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has sent a letter to Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak related to the developments of the current situation in the region, and Jordan's position on the peace conference.

'Ali Suhaymat, deputy prime minister and minister of transport, delivered the letter when he was received by President Mubarak in Cairo today.

In statements to journalists following the meeting, Suhaymat expressed his hope of upgrading normal bilateral relations to their best level. He noted that the letter he conveyed to President Mubarak is related to joint coordination between Jordan and Egypt. The deputy prime minister said the two sides' views are identical, and stressed that bilateral relations will witness a qualitative leap in the near future.

For his part, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stressed that the letter is a step on the road to important Arab coordination at this critical stage. Musa added that Jordanian-Egyptian coordination is continuing, and will continue within the framework of the peace process to which there is general Arab commitment on coordinating the important Arab positions. This will reflect on all aspects of Arab relations.

Suhaymat Returns From Cairo

JN2711191491 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Excerpt] 'Ali al-Suhaymat, deputy prime minister and minister of transportation, returned to Amman tonight after conveying a message from His Majesty King Husayn to His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, concerning current developments in the region and Jordan's position on the peace conference. In a statement to our political affairs correspondent, Salim 'Ali Dhiyab al-Suhaymat said that President Mubarak expressed his desire for coordination between the two countries with regard to the current peace efforts. [passage omitted]

Abu-Jabir Reacts to Israeli Postponement Demand

JN2711183291 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Excerpts] In an Inner Cabinet meeting today, Israel agreed in principle to participate in the bilateral talks in Washington. However, Israel demanded postponing the date of the talks until 9 December to prepare a detailed response to the U.S. proposals concerning the course of the coming talks. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir has expressed his regret over the Israeli stand. He told our correspondent: In any case, we will continue the peace process, hoping that this Israeli measure is not a maneuver to foil it.

The foreign minister voiced his hope that the spirit of the Madrid Conference will not be impaired and that obstacles will not be placed on the path of peace.

U.S. Must Deal 'Decisively' With Israel

JN2811120591 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Nov 91 p 1, 18

[Editorial: "The Manifestations of the Israeli Prevarications"]

[Text] The Israeli prevarications toward the peace process in the Middle East manifested themselves at noon yesterday in a manner that has been unprecedented since U.S. Secretary of State James Baker began his tours of the region early this year. The Shamir government has revealed premeditated intentions it had not previously revealed against the peace option, which has been forcefully launched with the convening of the Madrid conference.

When Shamir's government rejects the date of 4 December that has been set in the U.S. invitation to convene the second round of bilateral talks; when it also objects to Washington as a venue for these talks, which are taking place under U.S. auspices; and when it continues to insist that the agenda of the Washington talks should be confined to only formal and procedural issues, this means that Israel is preparing the ground to undermine the U.S. peace initiative and to sabotage all the diplomatic efforts that have been underway for many months to launch these peace negotiations.

While we believe that the ball is now in the U.S. court, particularly following the official statement by the Israeli Inner Cabinet yesterday. This will not divert our attention from the reality of Yitzhaq Shamir's stand, through which he continues to defy the international community, to refuse to abide by the principles of international legitimacy, and to disavow the UN Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 242 which does not permit the forcible seizure of the land of others.

No matter what the U.S. reply would be to the Israeli refusal to hold the forthcoming round of talks on 4 December, there is no doubt that the Shamir government, which was very much dismayed at receiving the U.S. invitation to attend the negotiations without prior coordination with it, may have adopted a perilous course whose consequences are calculated against the U.S. drive to attain peace in the Middle East.

From this premise, we will wait for the U.S. reaction to this intransigent Israeli stand vis-a-vis Washington this time to see how the United States will continue to abide by its overt commitment to the attainment of peace in the region while the Shamir government continues to further obstruct the peace march, which has started to gain momentum, and how the Bush administration will

deal with its pampered ally, who seems to want to defeat this administration and force it to give up the course it has adopted to score a decisive diplomatic victory in the Middle East.

While we watch Israel's pursuit of its well-known maneuvers on the realization of peace in the Middle East and witness all these Israeli practices, which poison the peace atmosphere and reduce the chances of success for such a peace process, we call on the United States to tackle the recent Israeli stand as seriously and as decisively as it deserves to avoid having the United States appear once again as the superpower which is led by a small country, and an extremist rightwing government which rejects the principles of international legitimacy and the UN Security Council resolutions, and remains committed to the perpetuation of the occupation of the land of others by armed force.

Disagreement Over Talks Date 'Insignificant'

JN2911103291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Nov 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Israeli and U.S. Mazes!"]

[Text] It is untrue that Israel's objective behind its request that bilateral talks in Washington be postponed is to show Israel's capability as opposed to U.S. impotency, or to assert Israel's rejection of U.S. decisions. Israel asked for a four-day postponement after rejecting international legitimacy for 24 years. Since Washington and Western capitals have done nothing about this rejection—in fact, it has led to further economic, military, and human support for Israel—Israel's request for a postponement and Washington's firm rejection of it are insignificant. What is significant is the outcome of the U.S. peace efforts and how U.S. words will be coupled with deeds regarding the enforcement of international legality, the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338, and the exchange of land for peace.

Israel will succumb to the date and venue set by Washington. It is being said that Washington is serious about looking for peace. What must be said, however, is that the United States can make us all reach peace, a just and comprehensive peace, whether Israel attends or not. The Gulf crisis has shown that the United States has enough vigor, capability, and resolve to launch a war to enforce international legality; it waited no more than six months before losing patience with Iraq's refusal to implement the unjust, immoral, and inhuman resolutions that had been passed against it. However, it is ironical that Arab time differs from Israeli time. Therefore, the West, led by Washington, has not even mildly criticized Israel to protest its refusal to accept international legitimacy for the past 24 years.

We do not wish to go into mazes, and we hate to be pushed into such mazes by Washington or Israel. Credibility necessitates that UN resolutions be enforced without delay—before the last Iraqi child perishes from starvation or disease, before the entire Iraqi people are annihilated by the brutal, barbaric blockade imposed on them, and before the Arabs declare their disavowal of peace. The Arab nation is not composed of millions of simpletons, but millions of people who need justice, peace, tranquility, and fairness, all of which we have been denied for a long time.

Rumors of Jordan-PLO Differences Denied

JN2711101791 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Nov 91 p 2

[Salamah 'Ukur column: "An Issue and an Opinion": "Why Talk About Imaginary Differences?!"]

[Text] There is increasing talk these days about differences in opinion and approach among the Arab parties participating in the peace conference, including the Palestinian side!! There is no doubt that suspect quarters are harping on these differences, which are mostly imaginary!!

What draws attention is that Arab political and press circles are talking about the emergence of an axis of two or more Arab parties participating in the Madrid conference!! What draws attention, too, is that that there is a sly attempt to spread rumors about an alleged contradiction between Jordan's position and that of the PLO.

We believe that the political battle the Arab parties, including the Palestinian side, will wage against Israel in the form of difficult negotiations that will be harder than war itself, requires an end to such suspect attempts that serve no purpose other than undermining the unity of the Arab position and thwarting the efforts to achieve advanced coordination among the Arab parties, including the Palestinian side.

The attempt to harp on imaginary differences among the Arab parties, including the Palestinian side, or to move toward the establishment of axis between this or that party, will serve none but the enemy. Likewise, any intentions or steps toward establishing an axis between this or that party will never serve any Arab party that is participating in the peace conference for the sake of restoring Arab rights and territories.

Delegation to Washington Talks Same as Madrid

NC2911111391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] An official source has announced that the Lebanese delegation to the bilateral negotiations in Washington will be the same delegation that participated in the Madrid conference under the chairmanship of Ambassador Zafir al-Hasan. Al-Hasan had earlier asked to be relieved of this task.

AFP, which carried the report, quoted the source as saying that the message President Ilyas al-Hirawi received from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad last Monday stressed Damascus's support and solidarity with the position of Lebanon and its delegation to the bilateral talks. The agency added that this message dispelled the fears Zafir al-Hasan and three other delegation members felt in connection with threats by groups opposed to the peace conference.

[Paris AFP in English at 0930 GMT adds "Al-Hasan and other delegation members who attended the Madrid conference have had police protection since their return from the Spanish capital."]

No Arrangement With Israel on Security in South

NC2811190991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Ambassador Zafir al-Hasan, director of the Foreign Ministry's Political Affairs Department, has commented on media reports about the results of the Lebanese delegation's talks during the Madrid conference. He said: The Lebanese delegation to the Madrid conference made no hint, whether directly or indirectly, at any kind of willingness to discuss the question of security arrangements with Israel in exchange for its withdrawal from the south. Furthermore, he added, neither me, my family, nor any member of the families of the Lebanese delegates to the peace talks in Washington have received any threats. Neither was I asked by the inhabitants of the building where I live to leave my home for fear of any reaction, he added. My decision to resign [from leading Lebanon's delegation] was the result of a certain confusion in the country that is known to everyone, and [words indistinct] from joining the delegation to clear this confusion. While denying these allegations altogether, I demand that the issue of the peace talks be handled in a highly responsible way and I urge those propagating mixed-up reports not to deal with the homeland's supreme interests in such a way.

Submission to Israeli Date Change 'Unacceptable'

NC2811210291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has expressed the hope that Washington and Moscow will not submit to Israel's conditions to postpone the start of the scheduled negotiations on 4 December. In a statement to AFP, Buwayz affirmed that Lebanon does not want to be an obstacle to this conference. It maintains, however, that submitting to these conditions, which are characterized by evasion and attempts to escape responsibility, is unacceptable. Buwayz also warned against Israel's continued use of such evasive tactics.

AL-SHIRA' Editors Arraigned for Slander

NC2911095391 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 27 Nov 91 p 5

[Text] The prosecutor general has arraigned colleague Hasan Sabra, AL-SHIRA' editor in chief, and colleague Ghazi al-Maqhur, the magazine's managing editor, on charges of publishing "in the magazine's editorial on 25 November material that was damaging to the person and dignity of the head of state and that contained statements slandering him and some other officials."

Colleague Hasan Sabra had published an editorial in the magazine entitled "Your Excellency the President: Reform or Resign."

Yesterday the internal security forces confiscated copies of the magazine on the prosecutor general's order.

The AL-NAHAR correspondent in Sidon reported that when the security forces started to confiscate copies of the magazine in the city, readers rushed to buy it until the price of the copy rose to 10,000 Lebanese pounds.

Cabinet Reaffirms Decision on Tayr Dibbah

NC2811082291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Radio Free Lebanon has learned that at its session yesterday afternoon the cabinet received reports on demonstrations staged by the inhabitants of Tayr Dibbah to prevent the Army from leaving. The cabinet discussed this issue from all its aspects. It reaffirmed that there is a priority represented either by the withdrawal of UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] or the Lebanese Army's withdrawal. The cabinet reaffirmed the decision to withdraw the Army and dispatch the internal security forces to replace it. The cabinet asked Defense Minister Michel al-Murr to convey this decision to the UNIFIL command and ask it for some time to prepare the security forces that will be deployed.

Birri—Withdrawal Decision 'Void'

NC2711180191 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] A meeting was held at noon today in the office of Minister Nabih Birri between leading cadres of the Amal Movement and Hizballah. The meeting was attended by Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi and a number of the party's Political Bureau members, including 'Ali 'Akbush and Haj Hasan Malak.

At a joint news conference after the meeting, al-Musawi stated that the meeting was part of the two sides' efforts

to unite and coordinate stands to embark on the coming fateful stage, particularly in view of the Israeli threat. Al-Musawi said the problem is not between the party and Army elements and that it lies in the decision adopted by the Army, which should defend itself and the people in the south. Al-Musawi said:

[Begin recording] The primary objective of the meeting is to achieve coordination in the various fields—political, media, educational, cultural, military, or security. There will be real cooperation in all these fields. The formula for that cooperation was developed during this meeting. I do not claim that this was the meeting which laid the foundations. For some time, there has been a basis for this cooperation, particularly through a joint operations room against the Israeli enemy. But cooperation was not on such a wide scale. The full basis for a real cooperation were laid down during this meeting. We hope this meeting will pave the way for wider cooperation which can act as a starting point for unity and cooperation with all nationalist, Islamic, and pan-Arab groups at the local as well as the regional levels. [end recording]

For his part, Minister Birri addressed a warning, saying the Council of Minister's decision to withdraw the Army from Tayr Dibbah is void, since it does not respond to the people's desire. Minister Birri said:

[Begin recording] What I now will talk about is very strange and ironic: To offer to withdraw from Jazzin is tantamount to a coup de grace to UN Security Council Resolution 425. Let no one interpret that we are against Israel's withdrawal from Jazzin. We do not want the Israelis to stay on a single inch of our territories. But the Lebanese Government, and the foreign minister in particular, made a proposal during the Madrid conference that [Israeli forces] withdraw from Jazzin. When such a matter is adopted in practice—by deploying the Lebanese Army in Jazzin on an experimental basis—and when the Lebanese Government adopted a decision yesterday to submit to the wishes of the Israeli enemy and not to the demand of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] by preventing the Army from deploying in the UNIFIL-controlled zone, this gives you an idea about the real intentions. The real intention is to implement Resolution 520 rather than 425.

Therefore, I would like to make a warning, just as I did at Tayr Dibbah. I held contacts today with the Army commander, the chief of intelligence, and all officials concerned. I warned them that this reminds us of 1982, when the Army was used against the will of the people. We said that the people should have a say in this matter. The people want the Army to deploy on every inch of our soil. Therefore, we declared a state of alert. Frankly, we will not allow the Army to leave the area of Tayr Dibbah unless it moves forward toward the border strip and not backward.

Let no one think that this matter is a result of battles or differences between the Amal Movement and Hizballah. As we said before, we viewed the recent incidents as differences among members of the same household. We said we were equally responsible for the matter. Let no one resort to one-upmanship on that. [end recording]

Al-Hirawi on Syrian Withdrawal, Hostages

NC2911063691 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has announced that the al-Ta'if agreement is clear on the Syrian Army's redeployment. He noted that the Syrian president frequently asks him to upgrade the readiness of the Lebanese Army because the Syrian forces want to withdraw from Lebanon.

President al-Hirawi said he hopes that UN Security Council Resolution 425 will be implemented before the Middle East crisis is settled. He said President Bush has given assurances on this point.

On the hostage issue, al-Hirawi said he has told Washington that Lebanon itself is a hostage and cannot prevent hostages being held on its territory. He said he hopes that this file will be closed before Christmas.

UNIFIL Confirms SA-7 Fired at Israeli Plane

TA2911062391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] A UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] spokesman has confirmed the Lebanese Police report that an SA-7 missile was fired on Wednesday at an Israeli surveillance plane. The missile missed its target. The spokesman said the missile was fired from the area of Majdal Silm, north of the security zone. It is not clear who fired the missile.

Israel Urges Army To 'Annihilate' Hizballah

NC2811104091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Yitzhaq Mordechai, the commander of the so-called Israeli northern region, has inspected the Jazzin area. In a statement to Lahd militia radio, Mordechai called on the Lebanese Army to drive Hizballah from Israeli-occupied areas in the south.

He added: We are prepared to cooperate with the Lebanese Army to annihilate [Ibadat] Hizballah.

Government Agrees to 4 Dec Washington Peace Talks

JN2811130391 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] An official source at the Foreign Ministry announced today that the Syrian delegation led by Mr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf will arrive in Washington on 3 December after the latter exercises his right to vote on 2 December. The Syrian delegation will be ready to participate in the bilateral talks on 4 December whether or not the Israeli delegation attends.

The official source added that the viewpoint of Syria and the other Arab parties is that the bilateral negotiations should continue in Washington. He added: We reject Israel's repetition of creating obstacles as it did in Madrid when it insisted on transferring the negotiations to another venue, which caused the peace process to be suspended until now.

The official source said that if the Israeli delegation does not come to Washington on 4 December, this will be new proof that Israel does not want peace and that it seeks through various means and excuses to evade the continuation of the peace process.

The official source said that Syria's consent to the U.S. invitation to convene and continue the talks in Washington underlines the special responsibility of the United States and its role as cosponsor of the conference to make the peace process succeed. Israel's attempts to move the negotiations to the region are aimed at placing more obstacles in the path of the peace process and to rob it of the seriousness and momentum necessary to make it a success.

Syria, added the source, is satisfied with the ongoing coordination with the Arab Palestinian and Lebanese and Egyptian parties. The importance of coordination was emphasized by Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak during the latter's recent visit to Damascus, and during Mr. Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Syria and his talks with President al-Asad, and the subsequent visits here by a good many members of the PLO, as well as the recent visit to Damascus by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating team. Coordination also came up during the recent meeting between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi in Syria, and during the visits by Lebanon's foreign minister to Damascus and his meetings with the Syrian foreign minister.

Jerusalem Notes al-Shar's Postponed Jordan Visit

JN2411124591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1102 GMT 24 Nov 91

[From the "With the Midday Events" feature]

[Excerpt] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has postponed his scheduled visit to Jordan yesterday, Saturday. Observers say that this postponement is due to Damascus' displeasure with Jordan's quick acceptance of the invitation to attend the peace talks in Washington on 4 December. During the visit, al-Shar' was supposed to coordinate stands with Jordanian and Palestinian officials in Amman before resuming bilateral talks with Israel. Middle East affairs editor Yitzhaq Halevi is with us in the studio and has this to say:

[Halevi] This is not the first time that Jordan has made a decision that angers or displeases Damascus. After the opening session of the peace conference in Madrid on 30 October, the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation decided to participate in the bilateral talks with Israel without listening to the Syrians' request to boycott these negotiations until some of the demands that they presented to the United States were met. Although the Soviet Union and the United States Thursday night proposed continuing bilateral talks in Washington on 4 December, and fixed no time frame for their conclusion, Arab diplomatic sources in Damascus said that Syria will postpone its acceptance of the U.S. invitation to go to Washington because it wants Israel first to agree to discuss the issue of land for peace. It seems that Syria is continuing its hard-line belief in the unfeasibility of negotiations if no talks are held on this land. The Syrian Government claimed it has not yet received the U.S. invitation. Diplomats see matters differently, however. It will be recalled that the Americans have fixed 25 November as a deadline for the acceptance of invitations.

Some informed circles believe that the Syrian authorities fear that Jordan will conclude a separate peace agreement with Israel, especially because Amman feels that the Jordanian and Palestinian commitment to these talks is a moral one, especially following the disengagement of ties with the West Bank, and that the aim is to provide the Palestinians with an umbrella so that Israel would agree to sit down with them. These circles said that replies to the questions that Syria had earlier sent to Washington on the new round of talks have not yet been received. [passage omitted]

Envoy Delivers al-Qadhdhafi Letter to al-Asad

JN2711164591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] At 1215 today President Hafiz al-Asad received Abu-Zayd 'Umar Durdah, secretary of the Libyan Jamahiriyah's General People's Committee. The meeting was attended by Mahmud al-Zu'bi, prime minister, and Humayyid Jallud, secretary of the Libyan Brotherhood Office in Damascus.

Durdah gave President al-Asad a letter from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan 1 September Revolution, concerning the situation emerging between Libya and the United States. The president asked him to carry a letter of reply. The discussion centered on current developments in the region.

It is worth mentioning that Syria had called, through an official source, for resolving the current problem between the United States and other Western countries on the one hand, and Libya on the other by way of legal and judicial means.

Afghanistan

'Moderate' Rebel Faction To Free Two Soviets

BK2811080891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0758 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Nov 28 (AFP)—A moderate faction of the Afghan resistance has decided to soon release two Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), the party said Thursday.

The soldiers were captured in western Herat Province by the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA).

NIFA spokesman Azim Nasir Zia told AFP by telephone that his party is to release the two POWs as part of a Soviet-mojahedin understanding reached in Moscow earlier this month.

The soldiers identified as coming from Azerbaijan and Lithuania, are being kept in Iran and would be freed by the NIFA office in Teheran sometime next month, he added.

The pro-West group of moderate rebels had joined a relatively less radical leader Burhanuddin Rabbani who led a mojahedin delegation for November 11-15 parleys in Moscow.

Three hardline leaders—Golboddin Hekmatyar, 'Abdol Rab Rasul Sayyaf and Yunes Khales—abstained.

Hekmatyar whose Hezb-e Eslami faction is believed to be holding most of an estimated 50 POWs, Tuesday refused to free any Soviet soldier unless a comprehensive settlement on ending war and the ouster of the Kabul regime was reached.

Zia said his party would abide by the Moscow agreement, hoping that the Soviet Union would ensure the release of a large number of Afghans jailed by the pro-Moscow regime of President Najibollah.

NIFA had earlier freed all Soviet POWs in its captivity.

The two soldiers were the latest captured on Herat-Towraghondi border on October 27 when NIFA commander Amir Hamza ambushed a mixed convoy.

Hamza's men captured two armoured personnel carriers and one tanker, Zia said adding that besides the two Soviets several Afghan soldiers were also made captive.

The last Soviet troops were officially withdrawn in February 1989 after 10 years of military occupation that had triggered a tribal insurgency in Afghanistan.

It was not clear if the captured Soviets were soldiers who stayed behind secretly or newcomers bringing in supplies directly from the Soviet Union, Zia said.

Foreign Ministry Comments on Iranian Famine Aid

LD2811172191 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesman on "recent reports by the foreign mass media on operations to extend assistance to the central regions of Afghanistan by the Islamic Republic of Iran"; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] As you are aware, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has recently decided to assist our compatriots in the central regions of the country by embarking on assistance programs that include basic foodstuffs. This operation is continuing.

As for the recent report by the foreign mass media concerning humanitarian assistance by the Islamic Republic of Iran to our compatriots in the central regions of the country, we must point out, without explaining the details of the assistance program, of which we are fully aware, that no plane can enter our country's airspace contrary to international laws and violate the airspace of Afghanistan without the permission and understanding of the authorities of the Republic of Afghanistan. Hence, no foreign assistance may be undertaken without the understanding and presence of our side.

In this context, as His Excellency Hasan Habibi, vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said in his statement of 4 Qaws of the current year [25 November 1991], the existence of differences between the states must not prevent humanitarian assistance to our needy Afghan brethren.

The Afghan side, for its part, has not and will not spare any effort to provide facilities in extending such assistance.

Rebels, Weather Harm Kabul Efforts

BK2811111391 Hong Kong AFP in English 1049 GMT 28 Nov 91

[By Pratap Chakravarty]

[Text] Kabul Nov 28 (AFP)—Mercy missions to help famished Shi'a Muslims in central Afghanistan are being threatened by rebel blockades of key highways in the region, relief workers and government officials say.

The onset of winter is also hampering the trickle of relief supplies being pushed into the mojahedin-controlled, mountainous region in hopes of deterring the starving from becoming refugees in Pakistan and Iran, they say.

Whole villages, most of them in the worst affected area of Bamian, with an estimated population of some 234,000, have fled Hazarajat, which covers five sparsely-populated central provinces of Afghanistan.

Aid workers say many might not return next year after selling off their livestock.

Though last month the exodus was towards Iran, some are now settling for the less arduous route to Quetta, a southern Pakistani border town known to be hospitable to Shi'a Muslims, and to Kabul several days' journey away, aid workers say.

"This is the worst disaster in 90 years... an entire population is now on the move in a desperate search for food," said 'Amir Hasanyar, a Kabul University agriculture expert who surveyed the region for the charity Oxfam.

Iran has responded to what is being described here as the "disaster of the century" by air-dropping relief supplies into Bamian in an operation given the green light by the government in Kabul.

Spring floods, followed by a wheat fungus epidemic and then an early winter frost, destroyed Hazarajat's wheat crop this year, affecting hundreds of thousands in Bamian alone.

"Waves of refugees from hunger are leaving on donkey caravans and trucks," Hasanyar said. "We estimate the area will be depopulated by four percent within the next 60 days."

The price of livestock has fallen by half as Hazaras—reputed to be the poorest of Afghanistan's poor—sell their cattle to pay for their exodus.

The cost of what little food is available has doubled, Hasanyar said, adding that resistance fighting to overthrow the Kabul-based government of President Najibollah have been poaching relief supplies.

"We smuggled in 20 tonnes of wheat under fodder to avoid detection by rival guerrilla groups on the route," Hansayar said, referring to a bitter feud between the Hezb-e Wahadad and the Harakat-e Eslami factions.

Both groups control the roads into the stricken areas.

A government plan to bypass rebel factions with a convoy of 204 tonnes of food this week is said to be floundering. The mojahedin refuse to give free passage over the five main access routes into Hazarajat and threaten to take whatever is not private property.

"Hazarajat has been most neglected by the United Nations, non-governmental organisations and governments," said Antonio Donini, chief of UNOCA, the UN office for coordinating humanitarian aid in Afghanistan.

UNOCA, hard pressed for funds, has appealed to donor nations for 94.1 million dollars and 61,000 tonnes of wheat to make up for the expected 1992 shortfall.

"The situation is absolutely grim. Everywhere (in Hazarajat) there is some tale of despair," Donini said.

"We are sending small quantities as people (rebels) surrounding Hazarajat don't like to be leap-frogged," he said, referring to attempts by his agency to send 200 tonnes of wheat from Pakistan and Afghanistan's Mazar-e Sharif region.

UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, has sent 1.5 tonnes of high-protein biscuits for undernourished Hazara children on special UN flights to Bamian, saying it is helpless to send more along rogue-prone roads.

"If we get this through, then we will try and send more," Donini [said], adding that winter snows were soon going to upset relief missions into Hazarajat, a landlocked region where infant mortality was the world's highest and life expectancy the lowest in global charts.

"Everyday reduces the total amount that can be transported (to Hazarajat) before winter sets in," warned Oxfam in a report, adding that the international community will have to provide a wheat strain which resists fungus and cold and which can grow quickly to avert a future calamity in the region.

Government officials said they are aware that people too poor to travel out of the striken zone were waiting to die of hunger. But they say it is well nigh impossible to send emergency food supplies because so many rebel factions prey along the highways.

Prime Minister Meets With Libyan Ambassador

LD2811193291 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] The prime minister's press office has reported that Esteemed Prime Minister Fazl Haq Khaleqyar this morning received at the palace of the prime minister 'Ali Baruq Shariqi, ambassador of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah to Kabul.

During the meeting, information was exchanged on mutual enonomic cooperation in the interest of the people of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, and on recent developments in the political solution of the Afghanistan issue. Emphasis was placed on consolidating friendly relations and fraternal ties between both countries.

Ruling Party Holding Internal Elections

BK2911081791 Hong Kong AFP in English 0722 GMT 29 Nov 91

[By Pratap Chakravarty]

[Text] Kabul, Nov 29 (AFP)—President Najibollah's ruling Watan Party has quietly started its first organisational elections designed to unite the faction-ridden party ahead of planned political changes.

The Hezb-e Watan (Homeland Party), which seized power in a bloody 1978 coup and last year changed its name from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to shed its communist past, is holding the

elections to democratise and unify the party base, Vice President Farid Mazdak said.

The party deputy chief said the elections were already under way at the lowest-level cells and the process would continue until a national party leadership emerged through the process.

"Elections inside party cells have started and this process will continue. It will lead to important changes in the cadres of the local (Watan) bodies which will give scope to us to unify the party," Mazdak said of the unpublicised internal poll.

"It will be from the bottom to the top," the party theoretician said, referring to reports that it was the 26-year-old party's first attempt at seeking a referendum for common leadership.

Elections were first suggested two years ago at a party congress, but were never held, said former Prime Minister Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, referring to allegations that Najibollah's Parcham faction had scuttled polls because of its reluctance to challenge the hawkish Khalq faction in an open popularity contest.

The Watan Party or the PDPA which was cemented in power through the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan while Parcham Secretary General Babrak Karmal was at its head, dropped him in March of 1986 and installed Najibollah as party chief and president, monopolising power through purges in the party.

Barring a coup attempt by Shah Nawaz Tanai, a Khalq, last year, Najibollah has continued to consolidate power uninterrupted through his five-year tenure.

Mazdak said the Watan elections aimed to further unite the Parchams and the Khalqs and bring forward "ideas of further democratisation" in line with Najibollah's reformist policies such as national reconciliation and political pluralism.

"The armed forces are also participating in the Watan party elections ... only those engaged in fighting will vote later," he said. Sixty percent of the Afghan military are committed party members, a majority of them owing allegiance to the hard-line Khalqs.

Mazdak did not say when the process would conclude, but party sources told AFP the Watan hoped to reach a political consensus and present a unified face to the world before the January 1 Washington- Moscow deadline for the suspension of arms supplies to all sides of the Afghan conflict.

Party elections began sometime earlier this month, coinciding with the government's move to dismantle Watan party cells in key ministries and departments such as defence and information.

"Our objective is to democratise the party. ... as the war de-escalates, our party reforms will speed up. ... at this moment I myself am not happy with the reforms that have taken place," Mazdak said.

But he added that it would be too complicated to abolish all party cells as members would require some political backup in any future system of government.

Observers said the Kabul regime had tried to speed up political liberalisation to present the Watan Party as a neutral entity during the formation of an Islamic non-aligned transitional government as suggested by the United Nations in its five-point blueprint for winding down the Afghan war.

"It is not possible to predict our role in an interim government, but the Watan Party is as much a reality in the Afghan society as the rebels in Iran or Pakistan," he said, adding that no future administration here would be complete without the regime's participation.

"The Watan Party is not the PDPA, but it is still not a new party.... but the process is on," the politician said, referring to the elections which he said would revamp the system and bring the Parchamites and the Khalqis closer than ever before.

The Watan Party regime is expected to come under immense political stress once Moscow cuts off its weapons and combat fuel supplies, but partymen say they will weather the strain as they did in February 1989 when the Soviet Union withdrew its 115,000 troops and left the regime to fend for itself.

India

Government Urges Unions To Ignore Strike Call

BK2811145891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] The government today appealed to the trade unions to call off their proposed nationwide strike tomorrow.

Making the appeal in the Lok Sabha today, the leader of the house, Mr. Arjun Singh, said that the government is already seized of the matter which causes concern to the workers regarding the new industrial policy. He said that the prime minister himself categorically assured parliament while the policy was announced that the workers' interests will be fully protected. The policy will also be discussed in detail in the current session of parliament. He said a special tripartite conference representing the government, industry, and their workers is meeting in the capital with the government side represented by the union minister of state for industry, Mr. P.K. Thungan. Another meeting is also scheduled in December.

He said any misapprehension on the policy can be sorted out across the table and the entire gamut of the policy can be discussed. Therefore, he said, the proposed strike at this juncture is not required, as it will not solve the problem.

Industrial Strike 'Peaceful'

BK2911091591 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] The one-day industrial strike called by some central trade unions has so far remained peaceful and incident free. Reports from various parts of the country say that essential services are being maintained and precautionary measures have been taken in all the sensitive areas.

In Tamil Nadu, train and bus services are plying normally. Schools and colleges are open. However, employees of some banks, including the Reserve Bank branch in Madras, did not turn up. All the public sector undertakings, including the Madras Port Trust, are working with normal attendance.

In Pondicherry, the strike evoked partial response. Normal attendance is reported in government offices. About 30 persons have been taken into custody as a precautionary measure.

In Andhra Pradesh, the strike had marginal impact on the public sector units.

In Bangalore, the working of some public sector undertakings, industrial units, and banks have been affected. However, rail and road transport service is normal.

The industrial cities in Rajasthan and Gujarat have not been affected. In Gujarat, employees of clerical cadre of some banks have joined the strike. A rally has been taken out by the bank employees in Ahmedabad city.

In West Bengal, the strike is reported to be peaceful. According to the state home secretary, most of the factories remained closed. Our Calcutta correspondent reports shops, business establishments, and banks are closed. Vehicles are off the road.

Our Bombay correspondent reports that banks, colleges, and air services have been badly hit because of the strike. However, the road transport has not been affected. Our correspondent reports about 5 lakh employees of the state government have also joined the strike.

In Delhi, the strike has evoked partial response. Our correspondent after going round the city reports that in most of the scheduled [semigovernment] banks, the attendance is very thin and no transactions are taking place. In other public sector undertakings, the attendance is partial. The DTC [Delhi Transport Corporation] and private buses are, however, running as usual.

According to railway sources, a large number of local and long-distance trains have been stalled at various places because of blockade by workers. Both the Southeastern Railways and the Eastern Railways have canceled or rescheduled long-distance and local trains. Delhi-bound Rajdhani Express scheduled to leave Howrah today will leave tomorrow morning.

The strike has been peaceful in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Tripura. Similar reports have been received from Kerala and other parts of the country.

The minister of state for labor, Mr. P.A. Sangma, has said that majority of the states remained peaceful and life is normal despite the strike. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, he said that the attendance in the public sector steel plants and coal mines is as usual and production is going on normally.

Walkout Crippled Industry

BK2911114291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1102 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] New Delhi, Nov 29 (AFP)—A 24-hour strike called by leftists to protest the government's sweeping economic reforms crippled Indian industry Friday and triggered sporadic violence across the country.

Millions of industrial workers and employees walked out, shutting thousands of private and state-owned factories and public sector companies, and disrupting rail, road and air transport in some regions, news reports said.

Spokesmen for six major left-wing unions and more than 40 federations claimed the protest was "an overwhelming success," but the government, which has estimated the cost in lost production at 115 million dollars, called it only partial.

"The strike is an overwhelming success, beyond our expectations," M.K. Pandhey, general secretary of the powerful Centre of Indian Trade Unions, told reporters here.

He added that the mass walkout was only the first salvo against the liberalisation policies of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's minority government, which came to power in June in the midst of the country's worst fiscal crisis.

"It is the first phase of a bigger movement," Pandhey added.

He said the strike seriously affected work in banks, and insurance, oil, steel, mineral and textile companies, and coal mines, and disrupted road, train and air traffic to varying degrees.

Pandhey said at least 12 million workers had struck nationwide.

But Labour Minister P.A. Sangma told reporters here that the protest call had received "no response" in 16 of 25 Indian states, a claim that appeared to conflict with independent reports.

Sangma admitted that the strike had "affected" state-owned Indian Airlines as well as banks, but disputed the strikers' claims in several other sectors, including the largely government-owned steel industry.

It was the biggest industrial strike in India since 1978.

"This (strike) is not for wages or bonus. It is a strike against the policies of the government," said Homi Daji, general secretary of the communist All India Trade Union Congress.

"It exposes the government claims that there is a consensus on the industrial policy," he added. "The working class has given a fitting reply, and it is only the beginning."

The strike is aimed chiefly at government plans to divest itself of 98 public sector units identified as chronically sick, creating worries of layoffs at a time of soaring unemployment and inflation.

The measure is part of steps the government has undertaken to open up India's regimented economy, inviting criticism here that New Delhi was bowing to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

The government has repeatedly denied the charges, but Friday labour leaders and leftist MPs reiterated the accusation.

In New Delhi, some 15,000 workers took out a noisy march in an industrial district, chanting slogans and waving effigies of the IMF, Rao, Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, and U.S. President George Bush.

The workers waved hammer-and-sickle red flags and chanted anti-government slogans until the police charged them with batons, injuring four protesters, a labour leader said.

In New Delhi and elsewhere, several thousand civil servants either joined the strike or struck briefly in solidarity.

The strike was a complete success in the Marxist-ruled state of West Bengal, where all trains and air traffic came to a halt, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

Strikers lobbed bombs and attacked non-strikers with stones in West Bengal, where schools and colleges were also shut. The strike also seriously hit normal life in Bihar and some largely-industrial regions.

Sporadic violence was also reported in Kerala, another leftist stronghold in the country's south where police fired in the air to disperse a violent mob.

Sangma reported clashes near the Bokaro steel plant in Bihar.

PTI and labour leaders also reported large-scale arrests across the country, including at least 2,000 in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

Indian Airlines cancelled 40 percent of its domestic flights, but a spokesman said the carrier was operating all international routes and working on "certain contingency plans." He did not elaborate.

The strike has the backing of communists, but is not being supported by unions affiliated to the ruling Congress (I) Party and the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party.

On Thursday, P.R. Kumaramangalam, parliamentary affairs minister, described the strike as "politically motivated" and said "certain sections wanted to make political capital out of the strike by misinterpreting government policies."

20 'Pakistan-Trained Militants' Killed; 2 Held

BK2811072691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0630 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] In Kashmir Valley, 20 Pakistan-trained militants have been killed and two others arrested in an encounter with the security forces near the line of control. An official spokesman said the subversives had infiltrated from across the border. The militants started firing when they were asked to surrender by the security forces. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was seized.

Official Criticizes Pakistan

BK2811075691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] India has blamed Pakistan for providing support and assured refuge for terrorists operating in Kashmir and Punjab.

The Indian representative, Mr. Manishankar Iyer, at the Human Rights Committee said that Pakistan has emerged as the single most important base for terrorism in the subcontinent. He was exercising the right of reply when the Pakistani representative devoted most of his presentation in the committee on Kashmir.

Efforts Against Pakistani 'Propaganda' Succeed

BK2811101291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] The government has stated that the diplomatic initiatives taken by New Delhi to counter Pakistan's propaganda on Kashmir have yielded positive results. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, said in the Lok Sabha that many countries which adopted a dubious attitude toward the issue earlier, as he put it, have now declared that Indo-Pakistan differences should be resolved on the basis of the Simla agreement.

Party Welcomes Postponement of U.S. Trade Action

BK2811145291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] The Congress-I [Party] has expressed satisfaction at the putting off of the retaliatory steps by the United States against India under Super 301 provision and hoped that the issue will be finally settled amicably.

Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Professor C.P. Thakur, said the U.S. action

is indicative of growing ties between the two countries. He said the party feels that it is also a signal for smooth negotiations in the GATT. The Congress-I also welcomed the outcome of the negotiations the prime minister had with the French president and other leaders in Paris.

Commentary Analyzes U.S. Official's Visit

BK2711142591 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Om Gupta commentary]

[Text] The pressure on India from world nuclear powers to sign Nonproliferation Treaty and to declare Southeast Asia a nuclear-free zone is likely to increase after the whirlwind visit of the U.S. under secretary of state for international strategy, Mr. Reginald Bartholomew. [sentence as heard] Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng is sure to pick up threads from where Bartholomew left last week in his forthcoming visit starting from 11 December.

Bartholomew had several sets of meetings with Indian leaders and officials, including three rounds with Foreign Secretary Muchkund Dubey in short span of little less than 12 hours. That shows the heavy brief he had brought to India after similar meetings in the Chinese and Pakistani capitals. In China, he had assisted his immediate boss Secretary of State James Baker on the same issues. But despite such hectic parleys, one can say nothing much came out of these talks except reiterating the already known stand.

It was an exercise in wishful thinking on the part of Americans if they had expected any other result from Bartholomew's visit. Because, despite changing trends in Sino-Indian relations, Americans cannot expect New Delhi to ignore the fact that China is a self-acclaimed nuclear power and the two cannot be dealt with separate yardsticks. Bartholomew did remind India of the Chinese suggestion for an agreement among the countries in the region for not using the nuclear weapons against a country having such power first, and not at all against a nonnuclear power. India acknowledged that it was aware of such a suggestion for long, but was unable to commit anything on the issue.

Seeing the American initiative in the matter on behalf of China, it can be easily predicted that the latter's prime minister is bound to raise it again. But, India seems to be determined that it cannot be cowed down in the matter. However, its options to review any issue are open.

Similarly, when Bartholomew brought up the suggestion of Pakistan's Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif for declaring this region as nuclear-free zone, India recounted its proposals for peace. These include signing of bilateral agreement or a joint declaration, or even a treaty to ban the use of chemical weapons. These proposals were made by Indian foreign secretary when he had discussions with his Pakistani counterpart recently in Islamabad. It is an ample proof of India's peaceful intentions in the region.

But Pakistan's insistence for declaring this [region] as a nuclear-free zone smacks of hypocrisy, especially after American Congress expressed the conviction that Islamabad has developed a nuclear bomb, while any such apprehension about India is yet to be established. Not only this, Pakistan's continued refusal to sign the Nonproliferation Treaty is yet another example of its doubletalk. The issue is not of a treaty or a nuclear-free zone, it is of the total security of the region and the threat perception of each country in this area.

As far as India is concerned, it can (?derive) solely from the fact that one of its neighbors—China—has already become a nuclear power and has got more than cordial relations with another neighbor, Pakistan, who continues to aid, support, and abet terrorist activities in its two sensitive border states. This latter fact was greatly appreciated by the visiting American under secretary of state, and he left New Delhi with this assurance that Pakistan should desist from such indulgence.

Apart from this bit of American appreciation, neither America nor India could extract any perceptible gain from Bartholomew's visit. However, India, who was reeling under the Soviet volte-face on the nuclear-free-zone issue voting in the United Nations, got another opportunity to show the world that it was capable of withstanding any pressure. It is a matter of additional concern that this pressure, instead of relenting, would be heightened in the days to come.

Iran

Rafsanjani Condemns Peace Talks in Friday Prayers

LD2911113991 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in his sermons in this week's Tehran Friday prayers, said: The so-called Middle East peace talks on the Palestine issue, which once again are being talked about these days, have thus far brought nothing but losses for Islam and the Palestine nation. At the same time they have brought Israel a few steps nearer to its objectives, they have distanced the Arab governments from their objectives by the same amount, and we witness the Zionist regime behaving more impudently every day to the extent that, in order to gain more concessions, it apparently has evaded going to Washington for talks and announces that, according to the wishes of that regime, the talks must be held in the Middle East.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed regret at a move that has been embarked upon for conferring legitimacy to the regime occupying al-Quds. He stressed: The Islamic

ummah must, by learning a lesson from these events and by availing itself of opportunities, compensate for this great loss.

In his remarks our country's president also honored Basij [Mobilization] Week and Navy Day. Referring to the self-sacrificing and sincere services of the Basiji forces during the imposed war, he called for volunteering and enduring hardships to be some of the characteristics of our county's Basiji forces. He said: The Basiji youth are the source for propagating Islamic culture, signs of righteousness, and self-sacrifice, and despite the passing of several years since the war, they are still in the service of Islam and the revolution. Thanking those who set up the Basij week and kept its memory alive, he said: The effects of the popular jihad during the holy defense—which brings about the continuation of the revolutionary-Islamic spirit and is the memento of the holy jihad era—must be preserved and in this regard the government also has implemented the same policy in its program.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani also praised the efforts of the Navy during the eight years of the holy defense. He said: Considering the importance of the Persian Gulf, today, also, this force is one of the important bases, on whose intelligence and presence in this crucial region the Iranian nation relies and will never forget its self-sacrifice.

Honoring the anniversary of the martyrdom of Ayatollah Modarres and Mirza Kuchakkhan, he recalled them as people who bridged the Constitutional revolution to the Islamic revolution.

Ahmad Khomeyni Says U.S. To 'Attack' Iran

NC2811155491 Paris AFP in English 1533 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Tehran, Nov 28 (AFP) - The United States are planning a military and political offensive against Iran to secure its "absolute hegemony on the world," the son of Iran's late spiritual guide, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, charged Thursday.

Ahmad Khomeyni told the Keyhan newspaper that the attack would come "after the United States settle the problems between Israel and the Arabs."

The United States, along with the Soviet Union, is sponsoring an Arab-Israeli peace conference and has launched invitations for bilateral talks to take place in Washington on December 4.

"To spread its absolute hegemony on the world America will resort to various instruments and satanical plots," he charged.

Khomeyni also criticized U.S. accusations implicating Libyan agents in the bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988, which left 270 people dead.

U.S. Seen 'Meddling' in Nuclear Issues

NC2311182591 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Nov 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Coincidences of the American Kind"]

[Text] A coincidence by definition is the occurrence of events that happen at the same time by accident but appear to have a connection. In the case of Iran's improving relationship with several countries over the past two months, there seems to have been many 'coincidences' to jeopardize them.

One can cite strange occurrences in France, Germany, Italy and most recently in attempts to sabotage China's developing cooperation with the Islamic Republic. Any hidden hand behind these moves become clearly visible in the latter situation, where a campaign to discredit Iran's relations was started by the Washington Post and continued by the U.S. State Department.

In essence it comes down to a formula of indirect American interference that has been repeated again in Iran's growing ties with India. Acting on a prompt by the Washington Post on Friday, the State Department said that it had "urged all nuclear supplier countries, including India, to avoid any form of nuclear cooperation with Iran."

As in the case with China, India was reported to be apparently discussing the possible sale of a small 10-megawatt reactor to the Islamic Republic. Both India, which has supported the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and Iran, which is a signatory to the treaty, have a clean bill of health from the International Atomic Energy Authority [IAEA], yet for the U.S., it sees itself as the supreme meddling authority to rule to the world by saying "not even under safeguards."

Many countries have nuclear reactors that are not associated with developing a nuclear weapons capability. Installations automatically come under the scrutiny of IAEA inspectors and the position of Iran has always been clear, as outlined by Vice-President 'Ata 'ollah Mohajerani last week, when he refuted allegations about gaining unconventional and mass-destruction weapons.

Rather the premeditated claims by Washington are seen as a propaganda ploy being waged by the U.S. in its psychological warfare against Iran that is being accompanied by pressures from the White House on other countries developing relations and trade. Being isolated from such moves, it's an action of pure vindictiveness by the Bush Administration, which is not used [to] being left out on a limb and being unable to cast its influence.

Libya Affair Portends 'New Era' of U.S. Power

LD2811212491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Following U.S. charges against Libya on its involvement in the explosion of a Pan Am airplane in 1988, a threat being made against Tripoli on this account, the Libyan Government, while calling for the investigation of the matter by an international judicial forum, has dispatched envoys to various Arab and Islamic states. [passage omitted]

It appears that the UN Security Council can play a major role in meeting Libya's request for investigating the U.S. claims through referring it to a competent and impartial international court. But nonacceptance of this request by America is indicative of the bad intentions of the White House in creating such a climate. By refusing to agree to the investigation of the charge by an international forum, the United States in fact wants to constantly have under its control that device through which it may pressure the opponents of its foreign policy.

As such, observers of political issues believe that under the conditions when a new world order is shaping up, in which the United Nations will have a major and sensitive role in resolving difference and tensions, this organization, through discerning its position, can pursue the desired policy without being affected by the domineering and power-seeking forces. Therefore, the U.S. refusal to refer this case to a competent international court, and its insistence on forcing Tripoli to accede to its demands, coupled with pressure against Libya, go to create doubt in the public opinion about the correctness of the White House charge.

Such moves are expressive of a new era of hegemonistic U.S. power in the Third World and those states which do not support Washington's foreign policy.

Velayati Meets Petrosian, Opens Consulate

LD2811112491 Tehran IRNA in English 1020 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Alma-Ata, Nov. 28, IRNA—Iran and Kazakhstan have agreed on building the mid-Asia part of a railway which links China to the Persian Gulf, said Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati at a press interview along with Prime Minister of Kazakhstan of the Soviet Union Sergey Alexandrovich here Wednesday night. The Iranian foreign minister lauded the outlooks of the president of Kazakhstan on the need for the solidarity of the Central Asia republics and expressed a good opinion on the future of relations with Iran.

During his visit to Alma-Ata the Iranian foreign minister opened an Iranian consulate while simultaneously the consulate of Kazakhstan was opened in Tehran. Later on Wednesday Velayati reviewed Iran-Armenia relations with Rafik Petrosian, foreign minister of the Republic of Armenia. Petrosian expressed an interest to establish Iran-Armenia relations which, he said, is a priority issue in the foreign policy plans of the republic.

Velayati said the Islamic Republic of Iran hates to see the slightest feeling of enmity between the republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan and advocates peaceful neighborly relations between all the Soviet republics especially those that are geographically closer to Iran. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran would be willing and ready to offer any help, whatsoever, in order to ensure healthy relations between the Soviet republics.

Arrives in Kyrgyzstan

NC2911074591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 29 Nov 91

[Text] The Soviet Republic of Kyrgyzstan wants to expand its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in all fields. The speaker of the Kyrgyz parliament, speaking at a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati yesterday afternoon, also referred to the cultural, religious, and historic ties between the Kyrgyz people and the Muslim Iranian nation and said the exchange of students and professors, as well as the teaching of Persian in the republic's universities, is extremely important and necessary. During this meeting Mr. Velayati expressed Iran's readiness to cooperate with the Soviet Republic of Kyrgyzstan in all fields.

The foreign minister, who arrived in Kyrgyzstan after a two-day visit to Kazakhstan, met with Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev before his departure yesterday. During the meeting, the Kazakh president referred to Iran as Kazakhstan's big friend and said: We expect the Islamic Republic of Iran to help us in the current difficult and complicated conditions.

Mr. Velayati also announced our country's readiness to cooperate with the Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan and handed an invitation from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Mr. Nazarbayev to visit Iran.

Velayati Message to Kuwaiti Counterpart Submitted

LD2411182291 Tehran IRNA in English 0842 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 24, IRNA—A message from Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to his Kuwaiti counterpart Shaykh Salim al-Sabah was submitted to Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Shahin by Iranian Charge d'Affaires to Kuwait Abolqasem Shasha'i on Sunday. The two officials discussed collective cooperation among the Islamic states in order to reach their common goals and the role of the Islamic Republic in this respect.

The two officials also discussed joint economic cooperation and problems of the Iranian nationals residing in Kuwait who have been unable to return to their homes and jobs in the aftermath of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August 1990.

Envoy to UNGA Denies Terrorism Allegations

LD2811105591 Tehran IRNA in English 0825 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] United Nations, New York, Nov. 28, IRNA—Iran on Wednesday termed as a "deceitful" effort the Zionist regime's allegation that the Islamic Republic and several other Islamic countries support international terrorism. The effort aims to overshadow the Zionist regime's four decades of aggression and tyranny against the Muslim people of the region, an Iranian representative to the United Nations said.

The Zionist regime's U.N. permanent envoy on Wednesday addressing the ongoing General Assembly session on Palestine accused Iran, Syria, Iraq and Libya of backing international terrorism. Further in his address basing his claims on a report by the U.S. State Department, he alleged that the Saudi diplomats in foreign countries are targets of Iranian attacks and that Tehran encourages prolongation of the hostage crisis.

The Iranian representative who took the floor after the Zionist envoy, termed as "baseless" the State Department's report and said it was no surprise that the Zionist envoy based his allegations on a report prepared by its main patron, the U.S. He added that the accusation is made under the conditions that Tel Aviv takes the pride for her illegal entry into Lebanon and kidnapping of the Lebanese civilians.

The reports of the U.N. and the world press are full of flagrant Zionist aggressions and terroristic efforts in the occupied lands and in the neighbouring countries. Furthermore, added the Iranian diplomat, Tel Aviv has given official support to the act of hostage-taking.

'No Obstacle' Seen To Upgrading Ties With UK

NC2911112291 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 25 Nov 91 p 2

[Editorial: "U.K.-Iran Relations Appear On the Up"]

[Text] British intentions not to question the fatwa [decree] on the life of Salman Rushdie must be seen as a positive sign in Tehran-London relations. A Foreign Office spokesman on Friday told IRNA that his government did not want to jeopardize ties between the two countries by bringing up the subject.

The fatwa, issued by the late leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeyni, is irrevocable and as a religious decree, is beyond the sphere of inter-state affairs, although in the past Britain has tried to treat it as such.

Having lost out dearly for most of the time since the Islamic Revolution, especially in comparison with other European community countries, the U.K. has much to benefit in having good relations with Iran. It had been London's previous stance supporting Rushdie's blasphemous book, 'The Satanic Verses' that lead Tehran to completely sever ties which were only renewed 12 months ago.

In failing to move against Rushdie's book, which inflamed Muslims everywhere and incited world wide demonstrations, the British government had insisted that it was a matter for its Director of Public Prosecutions, Allan Green, but who in turn also refused to act. It was perhaps his fate to have been forced to resign last month for a separate immoral act and it can only be hoped that his replacement takes a more positive line on the issue.

According to the latest trade figures, London has already gained from reopening its embassy in Tehran last year. It has also welcomed Iran using its spiritual influence on humanitarian grounds in gaining the release of three British hostages held in Lebanon, including church envoy Terry Waite, who was freed last week.

U.K.-Iran relations are underwritten by a memorandum of understanding, based upon mutual respect and the noninterference in each other's internal affairs. Provided that these are continued to be strictly adhered to, there appears to be no obstacle to upgrade ties to ambassadorial level.

Kharrazi: Rushdie Edict Irrevocable

LD2811110891 Tehran IRNA in English 0951 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] United Nations, New York, Nov. 28, IRNA—Iran's permanent U.N. Envoy Kamal Kharrazi once again Wednesday denied allegations quoting him as having said "Salman Rushdie should no longer be concerned about his life." "This is a complete distortion of truth," Kharrazi told IRNA here. The denial came after Rushdie's interview with the American NBC T.V. Network on Wednesday in which he alleged that while Kharrazi had said Rushdie should no longer be concerned about his life while the Iranian foreign minister had reiterated that the edict has remained unchanged.

Rushdie, author of the novel 'THE SATANIC VERSES' was condemned to death by the late leader of the Islamic revolution of Iran Imam Khomeyni on February 1989 for blaspheming Islamic sanctities. Kharrazi said that the aliegation was fabricated after his last week interview with the British Channel-4 T.V. in which he said "the edict on Rushdie is inalterable." He stressed that in that interview there was no mention of whether Rushdie should be concerned about his life or not. Kharrazi said that in that interview he had stressed that Imam Khomeyni's edict "is inalterable" but, however, the issue would not hinder expansion of Tehran-London relations.

He added that through such efforts some are after jeopardizing "expansion of relations between the two countries." However, he said, by distorting the history

Rushdie had proven that he was not a committed writer. "No doubt, he will not hesitate distorting statements of others," Kharrazi noted.

Commentary on Need for Revision of Turkey's Policy

LD2411151491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1102 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] With the new developments in the EC regarding the formation of a European defense system Turkey, a NATO member, right now assesses the future of NATO as disturbing. One of the Turkish Foreign Ministry's security officials, announcing this in a news conference, stressed that a European defense system plan must not weaken the ties within NATO. This is at a time when European leaders have openly put the formation of such an independent force, which in the long run will water down NATO internal ties, at the top of their agenda.

Since a year ago the EC has been seriously endeavoring to activate the Western European Union so that it can function as the military arm of a united Europe. The Western European Union came into being on the basis of the Paris agreement in 1954, but until a few years ago it was merely a place for interchange of views. But the more the process of European unity continues its development stages successfully, the more the need for the formation of an independent European force for the support of the EC foreign policies is felt by the leaders of the community. The European Union consists of 9 members, and Turkey is not one of them. Considering statements by officials of the Union, there are no plans, either, for that country's membership.

The Turkish Government, which has invested heavily in its relations with its European and U.S. allies, now feels threatened. Turkey, which has demonstrated her commitment to safeguarding the interests of Europe—and especially the United States—during past decades, even at the expense of her relations with her neighboring states, is now realizing the unrealistic nature of this policy. Political experts believe that in the case of a change in the U.S. leadership's outlook, in setting aside interventionist policies—which right now is being strongly pursued by Bush—Turkey will feel herself more defenseless than ever before. Although Turkey considers itself a European country, and so far has been less inclined to constructive cooperation with regional states, with the new international developments it feels the need for a fundamental revision of its foreign policy.

Daily Welcomes Waite, Sutherland Release

NC2911121091 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 20 Nov 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Consigning the Hostage Saga to History"]

[Text] There are many gross injustices and inequalities in the world that few people outside the Third World ever experience or are even aware of. Yet it is a common occurrence in Africa, Asia and, particularly the Middle East, to find rights trampled upon and basic needs denied for ulterior motives in the interests of outside forces.

One prime example in the past decade and more has been that of Lebanon, where several foreign powers have played out divisional conflicts for supremacy at great cost to the inhabitants of the country. The last major invasion dates back to the second incursion by Zionist troops in 1982 but it is one Lebanon still is paying heavily for with Israeli soldiers still occupying the southern section of the country and carrying out frequent bombing attacks with impunity.

One by-product of the Israeli invasion is the ongoing 'hostage situation', that started with the Zionist seizure of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians who were taken back to Israeli concentration camps, but which only became an issue in the mass media, when Lebanese groups in turn retaliated by taking Westerners to pressure for their release. The root of the problem, as continues to be the case, is in the Zionist regime being able to carry out more and more outrageous atrocities with much of the international community conniving by their silence.

Whatever justification Lebanese groups may have had for their retaliatory action or even if those taken captive were using their position in the country as a front for clandestine operations, hostage-taking itself has to be condemned on humanitarian grounds as the Islamic Republic has consistently done. Its policy has been to work for their release and if others had done the same the whole despicable saga may have been ended years ago.

News of the release of British church envoy Terry Waite and American Journalist Thomas Sutherland on Monday can only be welcomed and suggests that finally the last chapter in the affair may be drawing to a close. One can hope that the next one being opened will start with the heading of 'Justice for All' and that there will never be any more hostage-taking.

The TEHRAN TIMES predicted the imminent release of Waite and Sutherland and indications point to perhaps one or two more being freed in the next two weeks and the remaining few by the end of 1991. It is still hoped information will also be forthcoming on four Iranians, who were the first kidnapped victims but have largely been neglected in the emotions about Westerners held.

But to achieve an ultimate result, it would appear that pressure is still needed to be put on Israel by the U.S. and the international community to free the thousands of hostages it still holds and to show the Zionist entity that it cannot forever be the world's greatest violator of international law and human rights with impunity. Putting the hostage saga firmly into the history books should

mean writing a new era, when the voice of oppressed can be heard and their grievances be addressed.

Pakistan

Official Assesses Talks With Mojahedin Leaders

BK2811154691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Affairs Secretary General Akram Zaki has said that Pakistan wants an early solution to the Afghanistan problem on the basis of the UN five-point formula. He was speaking to newsmen in Peshawar this afternoon after holding talks with Afghan mojahedin leaders.

Mr. Akram Zaki said that Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif is taking a personal interest in the solution of the Afghan problem and that it was the prime minister who convinced the Afghan mojahedin leaders to initiate a dialogue with the Soviet Union. The decision to send the Afghan mojahedin leaders' delegation to the Soviet Union was backed by Saudi Arabia, Iran, and other friendly countries. He said this was the first time that the Soviet Union has admitted that its aggression against Afghanistan was a mistake. This was reflected in the joint statement on the visit. The most significant part of the statement is the Soviet Union's acceptance that an Islamic interim government should be set up in Afghanistan. The Afghan jihad had the same objective.

The foreign affairs secretary general said that in the current favorable situation, the responsibility rests with the Afghan leaders to avail themselves of this golden opportunity. They should forget their internal differences, forge unity among their ranks, and chalk out a plan for an Islamic interim government to which power could be handed over. The United Nations could play an effective role in this connection. He emphasized that Pakistan is only interested in a political solution of the Afghanistan problem and that it is up to the Afghan people themselves to determine their own future.

Talks 'Partial Success'

BK2811161091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1534 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 28 (AFP)—Pakistan's government Thursday reported a partial success in its efforts to win the support of three dissident Afghan rebel groups for the mojahedin's negotiations with the Soviet Union.

The official news agency APP [ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN] quoted Akram Zaki, secretary general at the Foreign Ministry, as saying Hezb-e Eslami chief, Golboddin Hekmatyar, had shown "flexibility."

Two other rebel groups, Ittehad-e Eslami of 'Abdol Rab Rasul Sayyaf and Hezb-e Eslami faction of Yunes Khales, were "still rigid" in their opposition to the dialogue with the Soviets, Zaki said.

Zaki had talks Thursday with the mojahedin leaders in Peshawar to discuss the results achieved by the mojahedin delegation which visited Moscow this month.

The official said during the talks in Peshawar, the base of mojahedin organizations, Hekmatyar had indicated his "readiness" to participate in future rounds with the Soviet Union after getting "some clarifications." The official did not elaborate.

Recounting the gains made by mojahedin at the November 11-15 talks in Moscow, Zaki said the Soviet Union had accepted that its 1979-1988 military intervention in Afghanistan was a folly.

"Most important" was that Moscow had agreed to the establishment of an interim Islamic government in Kabul, which was the "essence" of the mojahedin jihad, or holy war, he said.

Zaki said Afghan President Najibollah would have no role in the process and that power would be transferred to a transitional Islamic government.

Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the mojahedin delegation to Moscow, said on his return here that a joint commission of Soviet and mojahedin representatives would hold their next meeting in Peshawar.

Pakistani officials later said the session, expected in December, would focus on the possible composition of an interim administration in Kabul.

UN Official Notes Afghan War Casualties

BK2711151091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1128 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 27 (AFP)—In Afghanistan, a 14-year-old child knows how to assemble a Kalashnikov rifle in two minutes. But if you ask him what is one plus one, he cannot answer.

The Afghan war, forgotten by most of the world, has taken nearly two million lives in 13 years and "produced only losers," said Benon Sevan, personal representative of the UN secretary general in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Speaking at a press conference Wednesday in Islamabad, Sevan produced a series of "terrifying" figures on the conflict which still continues between the forces of the Najibollah government, installed by the Soviet Union before their military withdrawal three years ago, and the various groups of the Islamic resistance.

Ten million mines, 250,000 women killed, one in seven Afghans handicapped, 76.3 percent illiterate, an infant mortality rate estimated at 169 per 1,000, opium production estimated at 2,000 tonnes a year, six million refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

"The human dimension (of the conflict) has been forgotten," Sevan said.

Today, the real challenge for the Afghans is "how to win the peace," because "there is no alternative to a political settlement," he said. "The whole social fabric has exploded."

Agriculture is Afghanistan's principal resource, but the country's arable land has diminished 40 percent since 1978.

Sevan appealed to the international community for help, saying Operation Salam, the UN's economic and humanitarian aid programme, lacked 94.1 million dollars and 61,000 tonnes of wheat for its 1992 budget.

Some donor countries, such as Japan, had allocated major funds, but these had been frozen in the wait for the massive repatriation of refugees, delayed because of continuing fighting and the divisions in Afghan society.

Sevan, who holds the posts of both political mediator and aid coordinator, said "very good progress" had been realized during recent months in the search for a political settlement to the conflict.

He said he saw no contradiction between the UN's efforts for peace and the recent discussions held in Moscow between Soviet officials and several mojahedin leaders "as long as it moves forward."

Libyan Envoy Conveys al-Qadhdhafi Message

LD2811122591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1128 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Excerpt] 28 Nov (AMU [Arab Magreb Union] Pool/JANA)—This morning the brother secretary of the General People's Congress and personal envoy of the brother leader of the revolution gave Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif a message from the brother leader of the revolution for Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. This came during the meeting in Islamabad between the brother secretary of the General People's Congress and the Pakistani prime minister.

The Pakistani prime minister expressed the Pakistani Government's and Muslims' understanding for the stand of the Great Jamahiriyah. He called for coordinating the stands of the Islamic countries at the upcoming Islamic Conference Organization summit in Senegal toward the U.S. and British threats to the people of the Great Jamahiriyah. [passage omitted]

Minister Discusses Nuclear Program, U.S. Aid

BK2811035891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Mohammad Siddique Kanjoo, minister of state for foreign affairs, has said the national interest will not be compromised at any price. Speaking to newsmen in Islamabad yesterday, he said that Pakistan's principled stand on vital national issues has been clarified during the talks held by U.S. Under Secretary of State for Security Affairs Bartholomew with the president and the prime minister. In reply to a question on the obstruction of U.S. aid, he said that as an alternative Pakistan is implementing the policy of self-reliance to fulfill its requirements in various fields. The minister of state said Pakistan will not agree to sign the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty unilaterally.

Referring to the prime minister's proposal for making South Asia a nuclear-free zone, he said that the United States, PRC, and the Soviet Union have endorsed this.

In reply to a question, the minister of state stated the present government is raising the Kashmir issue at all international fora at an unprecedented level.

As for the talks being held on the Afghanistan issue, Mohammad Siddique Kanjoo said that Pakistan supports a peaceful political solution to the issue in light of the UN secretary general's five-point program.

Spokesman Reaffirms Nuclear Nonproliferation Stand

BK2711144691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Pakistan is fully committed to the objective of nuclear nonproliferation and has supported efforts at global as well as regional levels to ensure this. At a briefing in Islamabad today, a Foreign Office spokesman said at global level we have stated that Pakistan is ready to sign the Nonproliferation Treaty simultaneously with India. At the regional level, Pakistan has given a number of proposals from time to time. It has suggested since 1974 that South Asia be declared nuclear-weapon-free zone. Other proposals include acceptance of full-scale safeguards under IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency], signing of nuclear test ban treaty by India and Pakistan simultaneously, and a variety of other options.

He said the latest in the series was the 6th June proposal by Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif about consultations among United States, Soviet Union, and China and India and Pakistan to ensure nuclear nonproliferation. Pakistan is encouraged by the positive response by these countries during consultations. He expressed the hope that India would also be prepared to join in the process so as to free the region from nuclear weapons.

Spokesman Rejects Indian Interference Charges

BK2711160791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Pakistan wants to establish good-neighborly and tension-free relations with India and to resolve outstanding bilateral disputes peacefully, especially the Kashmir problem, which is of foremost importance. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that Pakistan has always pursued the policy of noninterference in the affairs of India. The spokesman categorically rejected New Delhi's latest allegations that Pakistan is training a large number of terrorists for subversive activities in India.

Support for Soviet Republics' Move To Join ICO

BK2711162791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Nov 91

[Text] Pakistan will support any move by the Soviet Central Asian Muslim republics to seek any form of association with the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] at its upcoming summit conference in Dakar. This was stated by a Foreign Office spokesman at a news briefing in Islamabad today. He said it is Pakistan's sincere desire to establish friendly ties and mutually beneficial cooperation with the Central Asian Muslim republics in the economic, trade, and cultural fields.

Bhutto Urges Strike Against Sindh Mass Arrests

BK2811162691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1444 GMT 28 Nov 91

[Text] Karachi, Nov 28 (AFP)—The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) called Thursday for a general strike in southern Sindh Province and rallies elsewhere in the country to protest the alleged arrest of more than 2,000 of its activists.

Briefing reporters after the first day of a meeting of the PPP's central executive committee, party leader and former Premier Benazir Bhutto said the strike and rallies had been called for Saturday.

She also said the PPP leadership had resolved to press for the removal of Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali for his alleged acts of "political victimisation of opponents."

In a hard hitting attack on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Bhutto accused him of abetting "the acts of political victimisation and other wrongdoings against the opposition."

The PPP said more than 2,000 of its activists, including dozens of local cadres, had been arrested throughout Sindh. The authorities have said only 318 people were held in a crackdown on "terrorists."

In a resolution, the PPP also declared its leadership had "no connections" with the "so called Al-Zulfiqar Organisation [AZO]," adding all allegations in this regard are "false and malicious" and aimed at "destroying a party which has national following."

The Sindh chief minister had told a press conference here earlier Thursday the 318 people arrested were "activists of the Al-Zulfiqar Organization."

This is not the first time the government has attempted to establish a link between the PPP and AZO, a group allegedly formed by Bhutto's younger brother Murtaza Bhutto during the martial law rule of the late President Zia-ul-Haq.

Benazir Bhutto was sacked in August 90 by Ishaq Khan on charges of misuse of power and corruption.

Jam Sadiq said that some 6,000 AZO members were operating in Sindh, alleging that neighbouring India gave them terrorist training.

"Every day at least five terrorists cross the border into Pakistan after receiving training in India," the chief minister said, echoing frequent allegations of Indian interference in Sindh.

"The government was taking action against AZO terrorists," Jam Sadiq said adding "if most of them happen to be PPP activists I can't help it."

He described Bhutto as the "operational chief" of AZO. "We have proof and we will go to the courts."

Jam Sadiq has often vowed to crush the PPP's political strength in Sindh after having blocked it from gaining control in Bhutto's home province following the party's defeat in October 1990 national elections.

During the past year, he has regularly won over to his side PPP leaders and activists in Sindh through what his critics have dubbed a campaign of "coercion, intimidation and political largesse."